AN ENQUIRY INTO THE LIFE and WRITINGS OF *HOMER*.

THE FOURTH EDITION.

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TO

THE RIGHT HONOURABLE

A**** Earl of *****

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE notes are intended only as proofs; and are long in ſome places where an induction of facts was neceſſary. The tranſlations from antient authors, being deſigned for the ſame purpoſe, are almoſt literal; which is the reaſon why they are not taken from more poetical verſions.

MY LORD,

IT is the good-natured advice of an admired antient, to think over the ſeveral virtues and excellencies of our acquaintance, when we have a mind to indulge ourſelves, and be chearful. His friends, it would ſeem, were ſincere and conſtant, or found it their intereſt to appear ſo; elſe the rememberance of good or great qualities, never to be employed in his ſervice, could not have proved ſo entertaining.

It is however certain, that the pleaſures of friendſhip and mutual confidence are purſued, in one ſhape or other, by men of all characters: neither buſineſs, nor diverſions, nor learning, can exempt us from the power of this agreeable paſſion. Even a fancied preſence affects our minds, and raiſes our ſpirits both in thought and action. The moraliſt's direction extends its influence to every part of life; and at this moment I put it in practice, while I

endeavour to enliven a few thoughts, upon no mean ſubject, by addreſſing them to your Lordſhip.

It is HOMER, my Lord, and a queſtion concerning him which has been looked upon as hitherto unreſolved: "By what fate or diſpoſition of "things it has happened, that none have equalled "him in epic-poetry for two thouſand ſeven hun-"dred years, the time ſince he wrote; nor any, "that we know, ever ſurpaſſed him before." For this is the man, whoſe works, for many ages, were the delight of princes [a], and the ſupport of prieſts, as well as the wonder of the learned, which they ſtill continue to be.

How unſafe ſoever it might have been, to have ſaid ſo of old at Smyrna [b], where Homer was deified, or at Chios amongſt his poſterity [c], I believe it would be difficult to perſuade your Lordſhip,

[a] Πτολεμαῖος ὁ Φιλοπάτωρ, etc. 'Ptolemy Philopater e-'rected a temple to Homer; and, having placed the ſtatue of 'the bard with becoming dignity, he ſurrounded it with em-'blematical figures of the ſeven cities which pretend to the 'honour of his birth.' *Elian.*

[b] Strabo, ſpeaking of Smyrna, ſays, Ἔστι δὲ καὶ βιβλιοθήκη, etc. 'In Smyrna is a library and a temple erected to Homer. It 'is a ſquare building, with a colonnade on all ſides. With-'in is a ſhrine of Homer and his ſtatue. For the people of 'Smyrna make high pretenſions to the poet's birth; and in-'deed they have a kind of braſs money among them, which 'they call Homer's coin.' Book 14. This ſtructure was built by Lyſimachus, one of Alexander's ſucceſſors.

[c] Ἀμφισβητοῦσι δὲ καὶ Ὁμήρου, etc. 'The Chians too lay claim 'to Homer as their citizen; and found their title upon a ſa-

"That there was a miracle in the case." That, indeed, would quickly put an end to the question: for, were we really of the same opinion as the antients, that Homer was inspired from heaven; that he sung, and was the prophet and interpreter of the Gods [a], we should hardly be apt to wonder: nor would it surprize us much, to find a book of an heavenly origin without an equal among human compositions: to find the subject of it equally useful and great, the stile just, and yet sublime, the order both simple and exquisite; to find the sentiments natural without lowness, the manners real, and withal so extensive, as to include even the varieties of the chief characters of mankind; we should expect no less, considering whence it came: and that I take to have been the reason, why none of the antients have attempted to account for this prodigy. They acquiesced, it is probable, in the pretensions, which the poet constantly makes to celestial instruction, and seem to have been of Tacitus's opinion, "That "it is more pious and respectful to believe than en- "quire into the works of the Gods [b]."

But the happy change that has been since wrought upon the face of religious affairs, leaves us at liberty to be of the contrary opinion: though in anti-

'mily in Chios, called the Homeridae, who pretend to be of 'the race of the poet.' *Strabo*, book 14.

[a] Ὡς φήσιν ὁ Θεὸς, καὶ θέων Προφήτης. Plato, Alcibiad. 2.

[b] De Moribus Germanorum.

ent times it might have gone near to baniſh us from Smyrna or Colophon, yet at preſent it is become perfectly harmleſs; and we may any where aſſert, "That Homer's poems are of human compoſition; "inſpired by no other power than his own natural "faculties, aſſiſted by the chances of his educati- "on: in a word, that a concourſe of natural cauſes "conſpired to produce and cultivate that mighty "genius, and gave him the nobleſt field to exerciſe "it in, that ever fell to the ſhare of a poet."

Here, my Lord, there ſeems to be occaſion for a little philoſophy, to put us, if poſſible, upon the track of this ſingular phenomenon: it has ſhone for upwards of two thouſand years in the poetic world; and ſo dazzled mens eyes, that they have hitherto been more employed in gazing at it, than in enquiring "What formed it; or how it came there?" And very fortunately, the author of all antiquity, who ſeems to have made the happieſt union of the courtier and the ſcholar, has determined a point that might have given us ſome trouble. He has laid it down as a principle, "That the greateſt ge- "nius cannot excel without culture; nor the fin- "eſt education produce any thing noble without "natural endowments*." Taking this for grant- ed, we may aſſure ourſelves, that Homer hath been happy in them both; and muſt now follow the-

* Horat. de Arte Poet.

dark hints afforded us by antiquity, to find out how a blind stroling bard could come by them.

I do not chuse to entertain your Lordship with the accidents about his birth[a]; though some naturalists would look upon them as the beginnings of his good fortune. I incline rather to observe, that he is generally reputed to be a native of Asia the less; a tract of ground, that, for the temperature of the climate, and qualities of the soil, may vie with any in Europe[b]. It is not so fat and fruitful as the plains of Babylon or the banks of the Nile, to effeminate the inhabitants, and beget laziness and inactivity: but the purity and benignity of the air, the varieties of the fruits and fields, the beauty and number of the rivers, and the constant gales from the happy isles of the western sea, all conspire to bring its productions of every kind to the highest perfection: they inspire that mildness of temper, and flow of fancy, which favour the most extensive views, and give the finest conceptions of nature and truth.

[a] Σονέζη τὴν παῖδα, etc. 'While the young woman lived 'here, (in Cumae,) it happened that she was privately got with 'child.' Herodotus in the life of Homer.

[b] Mimnermus, a man of a delicate taste, who knew the country well, calls it, ἱμερτὴν Ἀσίην, *the lovely Asia*: and Herodotus, who was acquainted with it, and most of the fine countries then known, affirms, ὃν μὲν Ἴονες ἔτω, etc. 'The 'Ionians, to whom the Panionium (the common rendezvous 'of the Ionian cities) belongs, have built their towns in the 'finest situation of any people that ever I knew, in respect 'of the climate and the mildness of the seasons.' Clio.

In the diviſion commonly made of climates, the rough and cold are obſerved to produce the ſtrongeſt bodies, and moſt martial ſpirits; the hotter, lazy bodies, with cunning and obſtinate paſſions; but the temperate regions, lying under the benign influences of a genial ſky, have the beſt chance for a fine perception, and a proportioned eloquence*.

* Leſt it be thought that theſe conſequences are ſtrained, it may be worth while to ſet down the opinion at length of the great Hippocrates, in his treatiſe of air, water, and ſituation: Βύκαμαι δὲ γ περὶ τῆς Ἀσίης, etc. 'Now, I will give my 'opinion concerning Aſia and Europe, and ſhew how far they 'differ from one another in every particular. Aſia, I ſay, 'differs exceedingly from Europe, in all kind of productions, 'both as to the nature of the ſoil, and the conſtitution of the 'inhabitants: every thing comes finer and larger in Aſia. It 'is a milder country than the other, and the manners of the 'people are more humane and beneficent: the cauſe of theſe 'things is the temperature of the ſeaſons; becauſe it lies in 'the middle, from the ſun's riſing in the eaſt, and removed 'from the cold; and there is nothing that contributes ſo 'much to the ſoftening and increaſing any production, as 'when there is no exceſs of any one thing in its compoſition 'againſt the reſt, but an equal diſtribution of parts every 'where prevails. However, we muſt not judge of all Aſia in 'the ſame way; but only of thoſe parts of the country that 'lie between the heat and the cold; theſe are the moſt fruitful; they enjoy the fineſt ſky, have the faireſt trees, and 'are the beſt watered, both from heaven, and by the rivers 'and fountains of the earth. For neither is it burnt up with 'heats, nor is it dried with droughts and want of rain; nor 'yet is it congealed with violent froſts, but kept moiſt by 'the ſouth-wind, which brings frequent ſhowers, and ſome'times they have ſnow. Of conſequence therefore every 'thing muſt grow there in its ſeaſon; plants either requiring 'ſeed, or ſpontaneouſly produced by the earth, whoſe fruits

Good ſenſe is indeed ſaid to be the product of every country, and I believe it is; but the richeſt growths and faireſt ſhoots of it, ſpring, like other plants, from the happieſt expoſition and moſt friendly ſoil [a].

The purſuing a thought through its remoteſt conſequences, is ſo familiar to your Lordſhip, that I need hardly mention the later hiſtory of this tract of land. It has never failed to ſhew its virtue, when accidents from abroad did not ſtand in the

' are uſed by men, after they are improved and tranſplanted ' from their wild ſtate into a proper ſoil. For the ſame rea- ' ſon the cattle it bears muſt thrive apace, bring forth fre- ' quently, and prove large and fair from their rich feeding. ' The bodies of men too muſt be well nouriſhed, finely ſhap- ' ed, of the largeſt ſize, and at the ſame time there will be ' the leaſt difference among them as to their ſize and ſhape. ' It is probable likewiſe, that this region comes neareſt to the ' perfection of nature, and the true temperature of the ſea- ' ſons: but in characters of men, neither courage, nor patience ' in hardſhips and toils, nor high ſpirit, can naturally be ex- ' pected from ſuch a ſituation; either produced in it original- ' ly, or tranſplanted from abroad; but pleaſure and ſoftneſs ' muſt always prevail.' Of Climate and Situation.

To the ſame purpoſe the philoſopher, Ἡ Θεὸς (Ἀθηνᾶ) πρεσβυς ὑμᾶς κατῴκισεν, etc. ' The Goddeſs Minerva ' at firſt ſettled you, (Athenians,) having pitched upon the ' place where you now dwell, becauſe ſhe perceived the ' happy mixture of the ſeaſons in it, and knew that it would ' produce men of the greateſt thought and capacity.' Plato's Timaeus.

[a] *Ingenia hominum ubique locorum ſitus format*: ' The ſitua- ' tion of countries every where forms the genius of men.' Quintus Curtius, book 8. The proof of this aſſertion is attempted in form, in a treatiſe of Galen's; That the manners of mankind depend upon the conſtitution of their bodies.

way. In the early times of liberty, the firſt, and greateſt number of philoſophers[a], hiſtorians[b], and poets[c], were natives of the Aſiatic coaſt, and adjacent iſlands. And, after an interval of ſlavery,

[a] Thales of Miletus, contemporary with Cyrus: Anaximander, Anaximenes, his ſcholars, of the ſame place. Pythagoras of Samos. Heraclitus of Epheſus; and Hermagoras, who was baniſhed that city for his too great ſobriety. Chryſippus was of Soli, Zeno of Cyprus, Anaxagoras of Clazomene, Xenophanes, the naturaliſt, was of Colophon. Cleanthes, the Stoic, of Aſſus, where Ariſtotle ſtaid for many years. Metrodorus, the great friend of Epicurus, was of Lampſacus; where this philoſopher too dwelt ſo long that he may almoſt paſs for a native. Theophraſtus, and his companion Phanias, were of Ereſſus, and his ſucceſſor Neleus, the heir of Ariſtotle's library, was of Scepſis. Theſe, and Xenocrates the Platonic, Arceſilas the academic, Protarchus the Epicurean, and Endoxus the mathematician, Plato's friend (all great names in philoſophy) drew their firſt breath on the ſame coaſt: as did likewiſe Hippocrates, Simus, Eraſiſtratus, Aſclepiades, Apollonius, the greateſt maſters of medicine. It is alſo obſervable, that of the ſeven early ſages, called the wiſe men of Greece, four belonged to this climate: Pittacus of Mitylene, Bias of Priene, Cleobulus the Lindian, and the abovementioned Mileſian Thales.

[b] Hecataeus and Pherecydes, the two eldeſt hiſtorians the Greeks had, was the one of Miletus, and the other of the little iſland Syros. Hellanicus was of Leſbus, Theopompus of Chios: Old Scylax was of Caryanda. Ephorus, the great hiſtorian, was of Cumae: Cteſias, phyſician to Artaxerxes, king of Perſia, and a great writer of wonders, was of Gnidus: to whom, if you join the inimitable Herodotus, you will have the names of the chief hiſtorians among the Greeks, excepting the two Athenians, Thucydides and Xenophon.

[c] Heſiod, near Homer's own days, was of Cumae; Mimnermus of Colophon, Archilochus of Paros, Tyrtaeus of Miletus; Thales, the poet and law-giver, and Epimenides, the charmer,

when the influences of the Roman freedom, and of their mild government, had reached that happy country, it repaid them, not only with the delicacies of their fields and gardens, but with the more valuable productions of men of virtue and learning [a]; and in such numbers as to fill their schools,

were of Crete. Anacreon was a Teian, Simonides a Cean, Arion and Terpander were Lesbians: and, not to mention the particular places of every one's birth, the admired Sappho, her lover Alcaeus, Bachyllides, Chaerilus (not Alexander's,) Phocylides, Bion, Simmias, Philetas, Ion the tragedian, Philemon, Menander's rival, Hegemon, Epaminondas's panegyrist, and the astronomic poet Aratus, were all born in this poetical region. It had also the honour of producing the Erythraean Sibyl, and another inspired lady, Athenais, under Alexander. But what is by far the most remarkable upon this article, is, that the famous five, who distinguished themselves in epic-poetry, were all natives of this very climate, and the two greatest born in the two neighbouring towns, Cumae and Smyrna. Hear the testimony of the learned Tzetzes: Γεγόνασι δὲ τούτων τῶν Ποιητῶν, etc. 'There have been five celebrated poets of the epic kind; old Homer the first, then Antimachus the Colophonian, then Panyasis [of Halicarnassus,] Pisander of Camirus, and this Hesiod of Cumae.' Life of Hesiod. Pisander was of Rhodes, and of great reputation. Πείσανδρος ὁ διασημότατος Ποιητὴς, Καμιρεὺς ἦν. Στέφαν. περὶ πολέων. Antimachus wrote the Theban war; and Panyasis the labours of Hercules: he was of Halicarnassus. Suidas says of him, Σώσασαν τὴν Ποιητικὴν ἐπαναγαγε. 'He retrieved poetry when it was almost extinguished.'

[a] Panaetius, Stratocles, Andronicus the peripatetic, Leonidas the stoic, and before them Praxiphanes, Eudemus, and Hieronymus, were all of Rhodes. Posidonius was of Apamea in Syria, but lived, governed, and taught in the same island. Charon the historian, Adeimantus, and Anaximenes the rhetor, were of Lampsacus. Agatharchides the Aristotelic, of Gnidus,

and the houſes of the great; to be companions for their princes [a], and to leave ſome noble monuments for poſterity.

It will probably be thought too great a refinement to obſerve, that Homer muſt have been the

Eraſtus and Caryſcus, of the ſocratic ſchool, were natives of Scepſis near Troy. That little place was formerly famous for the birth of Demetrius, the celebrated critic, contemporary with Ariſtarchus; and of Metrodorus, a man of high ſpirit and eloquence, the unhappy favourite of the great Mithridates. Hegeſias, Xenocles, and Menippus, were the authors and greateſt ornaments of the Aſiatic eloquence: and in general, the teachers of oratory and philoſophy came from the ſame coaſt: Diophanes, Potamon and Leſbocles, great men and rivals, from Mitylene; Crinagoras, Dionyſius Atticus, Diodorus Sardianus, Diotrephes, Alexander ſurnamed Lychnus, Dionyſocles, and Damaſus called Scombrus; Apollonius Nyſaeus, Menecrates, Apollonius Malacus, Nicias of Cos, who grew ambitious and turned tyrant; Theodorus Cronus the dialectic, Archidamus, Antipater, Neſtor, ſtoics; with many others, whom ſee in Seneca the father, his Controver. et Suaſor. lib. where he relates the ſentences of the Grecian maſters.

[a] Theophanes the hiſtorian, Pompey's great friend and counſellor, was of Mitylene: his ſon was afterwards prefect of Aſia. Ariſtodemus of Nyſa had been Pompey's maſter; and his couſin-german, of the ſame name, was entruſted with the education of the children of that great man. Pompey's younger ſon, Sextus, when he was lord of the ſeas, had Dionyſius the Halicarnaſſean among his friends, the celebrated hiſtorian and critic. Theopompus of Gnidus, and his ſon, were both favourites of Julius Caeſar; and the father had a great hand in his ſhort adminiſtration. Apollonius Molo was Cicero's maſter. Pompey, going to his eaſtern expedition, paid Poſidonius a viſit in his ſchool at Rhodes, and humbled his Faſces at the gate, as they uſed to do to a ſuperior: when he was about to take leave, he aſked his commands, and this courtly philoſopher bid him, in a line of Homer,

first or second generation after the transplantation, or rather the final settlement of this colony, from the rocky Morea to these happy lands: a situation, in which nature is observed to make the most vigorous efforts, and to be most profuse of her genial treasure. The curious in horses are concerned to have a mixed breed, a remove or two from the foreign parent; and what influence it might have here, will belong to the curious in mankind to determine.

If Homer then came into the world in such a country, and under so propitious an aspect of nature, we must next enquire, 'What reception he 'met with upon his arrival; in what condition he 'found things, and what dispositions they must pro-'duce in an exalted genius, and comprehensive mind.' This is a difficult speculation, and I should be un-

Αἰὲν ἀριστεύειν καὶ ὑπείροχον ἔμμεναι ἄλλων;

Always excell and shine above the rest; — the thing in the world he most wanted to do. Hybreas, the finest speaker in his time, was in high favour with Marc Antony; and the care of Augustus's manners was committed, by Caesar his uncle, to Apollodore the Pergamenian. The elder Athenodore needs no other proof of his virtue and merit, than that he lived and died with Marcus Cato. The younger held a high place in Augustus's favour, grew dearer to him the longer he lived, got great honour; and, when weary of the court, returned with absolute power from the prince to reform and govern his native city. He was succeeded in favour and honour by Nestor the academic, who was charged with the education of the noble Marcellus, Octavia's son, and apparent heir of the empire.

der ſome apprehenſions how to get through it, if I did not know that men moving, like your Lordſhip, in the high ſpheres of life, are well acquainted with culture and education. They know the changes they are able to produce; and are not ſurprized to find them, as it were, new-moulding human creatures, and transforming them more than Urganda or Circe. The influence of example and diſcipline is, in effect, ſo extenſive, that ſome very acute writers have miſtaken it for the only ſource of our morals[a]: though the root lies deeper, and is more interwoven with our original frame. However, as we have at preſent only to do with Homer, in his poetical capacity, we need give ourſelves no farther trouble in conſidering the tenor of his life, than as it ſerved to raiſe him, to be the prince of his profeſſion.

In this ſearch, we muſt remember, that young minds are apt to receive ſuch ſtrong impreſſions from the circumſtances of the country where they are born and bred, that they contract a mutual kind of likeneſs to thoſe circumſtances, and bear marks of the courſe of life through which they have paſſed. A man who has had great misfortunes, is eaſily diſtinguiſhed from one who has lived all his days in high proſperity; and a perſon bred to buſineſs, has a very different appearance from another brought up in ſloth and pleaſure: both our underſtanding

[a] Monſ. Mothe le Vayer, etc.

and behaviour receive a ſtamp from our ſtation and adventures; and as a liberal education forms a gentleman, and the contrary a clown, in the ſame manner, if we take things a little deeper, are our minds and manners influenced by the ſtrain of our lives. In this view, the circumſtances that may reaſonably be thought to have the greateſt effect upon us, may perhaps be reduced to theſe following:

Firſt, The ſtate of the country where a perſon is born and bred; in which I include the common manners of the inhabitants; their conſtitution civil and religious, with its cauſes and conſequences:— their manners are ſeen in the ordinary way of living, as it happens to be polite or barbarous, luxurious or ſimple.

Next, the manners of the times, or the prevalent humours or profeſſions in vogue:— theſe two are public, and have a common effect on the whole generation. Of a more confined nature is, firſt, private education; and after that, the particular way of life we chuſe and purſue, with our fortunes in it.

From theſe accidents men in every country may be juſtly ſaid to draw their character, and derive their manners. They make us what we are, in ſo far as they reach our ſentiments, and give us a peculiar turn and appearance: a change in one of them makes an alteration upon us; and taken toge-

ther, we muſt conſider it as the moulds that form us into thoſe habits and diſpoſitions, which ſway our conduct, and diſtinguiſh our actions.

SECT. II.

THERE are ſome things, my Lord, which, though they happen in all ages, are yet very hard to deſcribe. Few people are capable of obſerving them; and therefore terms have not been contrived to expreſs perceptions which are taken from the wideſt views of human affairs. Of this kind is a circumſtance which attends the fate of every nation. It may be called a *progreſſion of manners*; and depends, for the moſt part, upon our fortunes: as they flouriſh or decline, ſo we live and are affected; and the greateſt revolutions in them produce the moſt conſpicuous alterations in the other: for the manners of a people ſeldom ſtand ſtill, but are either poliſhing or ſpoiling. In nations, where for many years no conſiderable changes of fortune happen, the various riſes and falls in their moral character are the leſs obſerved: but when, by an invaſion and conqueſt, the face of things is wholly changed; or when the original planters of a country, from a ſtate of ignorance and barbarity, advance, by policy and order, to wealth

and power, it is then, that the ſteps of the progreſſion become obſervable: we can ſee every thing on the growing hand, and the very ſoul and genius of the people riſing to higher attempts, and a more liberal manner.

From the accounts left us of the ſtate of antient Greece, by the moſt accurate of their hiſtorians [a], we may perceive three periods in their affairs. The firſt, from the dark ages, of which they had little or no knowlege [b], to the time of the Trojan war. The ſecond, from the taking of Troy, to the Perſian invaſion, under Xerxes. The third, from that time, to the loſs of their liberty, firſt by the Macedonians, and then by the Romans. Greece was peopled in the firſt; ſhe grew, and the conſtitution was ſettled in the ſecond; ſhe enjoyed it in the third, and was in all her glory. From the two firſt periods Homer drew his imagery and manners, learned his language, and took his ſubject, which makes it neceſſary for us to review them.

What is properly called Greece, is but a rough

[a] Thucidides, lib. i.

[b] Cur ſupera bellum Thebanum et funera Trojae,
Non alias alii quoque res cecinêre poetae?
Quo tot facta virûm toties cecidêre? Nec uſquam,
Æternis famae monumentis inſita florent? T. LUCR.

Why then no wars our poets ſongs employ
Beyond the ſiege of Thebes and that of Troy?
Why former heroes fell without a name,
Nor e'er a battle told by laſting fame? CREECH.

country: it boaſts indeed, as well it may in ſuch an extent, many a fine vale, and delicious field; but taking it together, the ſoil is not rich or inviting. It was antiently but thinly inhabited; and theſe inhabitants were expoſed to the greateſt hardſhips: they had no conſtant or fixed poſſeſſions; but there were frequent removes, one nation or tribe expelling another, and poſſeſſing themſelves of their ſeats[a]: this was then looked upon to be a great calamity, but not near ſo grievous as we imagine it now, or indeed as they themſelves thought it afterwards: for there being no traffic among them, or ſecure intercourſe, they had but the bare neceſſaries of life: they planted no lands, acquired no ſuperfluities, and built only ſhelters from the weather[b]: experience made them ſenſible of the uncertainty of their poſſeſſions; and as they knew not

[a] ἡ Ἑλλὰς ἡ παλαὶ, etc. 'Greece had antiently no ſettled 'inhabitants, but removes (by reaſon of the expulſion of 'tribes) were frequent in the early times.' Thucydides, book i.

[b] Nec robuſtus erat curvi moderator aratri
Quiſquam; nec ſcibat ferro mollirier arva;
Nec nova defodere in terram virgulta; nec altis
Arboribus, veteres decidere falcibu' ramos.
Quod ſol atque imbres dederant, quod terra creârat
Sponte ſua, ſatis id placabat pectora donum:
Glandiferas inter curabant corpora quercus.
T. Lucret. lib. 5.

No ſturdy plowman yet had learn'd to tear
Earth's fruitful boſom with a crooked ſhare;

how ſoon a ſuperior force might ſpoil them of their lands, ſo they were ſure of finding ſuch a ſcanty ſubſiſtence as they then enjoyed, in any country where they happened to wander; and therefore, without making much oppoſition, they quitted their ſorry dwellings, and made room for an invader.

Of a piece with this way of living at land, was their manner at ſea, as ſoon as they began to build ſhips, and venture to viſit diſtant coaſts: they turned themſelves wholly to piracy; and were ſo far from thinking it baſe, that the living by plunder gave a reputation for ſpirit and bravery. This practice continued long in Greece, not among the meaner ſort of people only; but the moſt powerful of the tribe ſailed out with thoſe under their command, took what ſhips they met; and, if they thought their numbers ſufficient, they often fell upon the villages along the coaſt, killed the men, and carried the women and goods to their ſhip [a]. Thucydides ſays, that even in his time there were

None knew to plant young trees; none dreſs'd the vine,
Nor prun'd decaying boughs, nor preſs'd the wine:
Contented they with the poor eaſy ſtore
That ſun and earth beſtow'd, they ſought no more.
They liv'd to ſhady groves and caves confin'd,
Mere ſhelter from the cold, the heat, the wind.

CREECH.

[a] Ἦσαν γὰρ ἅπαντες, 'The antient Greeks were generally addicted to ſpoil, and covetous of other people's poſſeſſions.' Strabo's Geograph. book 17.

ſeveral uncivilized countries in Greece, whoſe inhabitants lived both by ſea and land after the old barbarous manner [a].

Theſe then were the manners in Homer's days; and ſuch we find them in his writings. Ulyſſes returning in diſguiſe to his own country, was received by his ſervant Eumæus, as a poor old man, into his cottage; and being queſtioned who and whence he was, tells this plauſible tale; "That he was of Crete, a natural ſon of the renowned Caſtor, and much beloved by his father while he lived; but at his death, his brother had drove him out of the houſe, and defrauded him of his ſhare of the patrimony: that nevertheleſs his worth and bravery had procured him a rich and honourable match:" he then bids him judge of the ear by the ſtalk; expatiates a little upon his own martial character, and adds,

Τοιος ἐ εν πολεμω εργον δ' ἐ μοι ου φιλον εσκεν.

Such in the war; I ſcorned country toils
And houſhold cares, and bringing up of children:
But ſhips with ſails and oars rejoic'd my ſoul;
Battles, and burniſh'd arms, and glitt'ring ſpears,

[a] Καὶ μέχρι τῦδε, etc. 'To this day the cuſtoms that prevail, among the great part of the Greek nations, are of the old ſtam, [that is, love of plunder,] as among the Locri Ozolae, the Etolians, the Acarnanians, and the inhabitants of the bordering coaſts of Epirus.' Thucydides, book 1. See alſo Plutarch, in the life of T. Q. Flaminius.

Things that to others terror bring and dread,
Were my delights; ſo God had form'd my heart.

Here is a man who plainly profeſſes piracy; and accordingly he tells, that in nine ſeveral courſes he gained ſo much wealth, that he was held in great eſteem among his countrymen,

—— Αιψα δ' επ' ωρελλετο, etc.

My houſe was ſoon advanc'd; and afterwards
I reverence had, and awe among the Cretans.

And when Ulyſſes, in his turn, comes to enquire into the fortunes of Eumæus, he chuſes this ſuppoſition, as the moſt natural he could make:

But come and tell me truly what I aſk;
Whether the ſpacious town was pillaged,
In which my father, and my mother liv'd?
Or whether men came unawares upon thee,
Left ſingle with the oxen, or the ſheep,
And dragging thee aboard, ſail'd over hither
To this man's dwelling? —— [a]

Theſe being the manners of the times, we need not wonder at Homer's repreſenting the good Neſtor, as entertaining Telemachus and his company very honourably in his houſe, and after repaſt aſking them, *Whether they were merchants?*

—— η μαλιδιως Αλαλησθε, οια τε Λησταρες; ——
—— *Or do you rove uncertain,*
As being Robbers? ——

[a] Odyſſey, ver. 200.

Nor was Homer's own country behind-hand with the reſt of the Greeks. We learn from Herodotus, that Latona's oracle in Boutoo had aſſured Pſammetichus (one of the twelve kings, when Egypt was broken into petty governments) that brazen men would come to his aſſiſtance: they were no other, ſays the hiſtorian, than Ἴωνες τε καὶ Κᾶρες ἄνδρες κατὰ λῃΐην ἐκπλώσαντες, Ionian and Carian crews, who had ſailed out on piracy, and were forced by ſtorm to land in Egypt.

But as every misfortune forces men to think of a remedy, the calamities to which this barbarous way of living was expoſed, taught the Greeks, in proceſs of time, the neceſſity of walling their towns; which, in its turn, procured them ſecurity and wealth, and firſt enriched the cities upon the ſea: theſe who lay moſt expoſed to inſults before, were now moſt open to trade; and the Phœnician and Egyptian merchants quickly taught them the methods of gain: by this means Chalcis, Corinth, and Mycenæ were the firſt opulent cities after the iſles. Riches ſoon produced ſubordination; the leſs powerful being contented with the protection of the rich and brave; and theſe, on the other hand, were glad of numbers for carrying on their affairs[a].

[a] Condere coeperunt tum urbeis, arcemque locare
Praeſidium reges ipſi ſibi, perfugiumque;
Et pecudes et agros diviſêre; atque dedere
Pro facie cujuſque, et viribus, ingenioque.
T. Lucret. lib. 5.

Poverty was ſtill prevalent in the country, when Pelops came from Aſia, with a flood of wealth, till then unknown in Greece; and by that, and his ſkill in the neceſſary arts of life, he gained ſuch power among the rude inhabitants, that he gave his name to a great part of the country [a].

His deſcendants Atreus and Thyeſtes added to their hereditary dominions; and fortune made a preſent of a new kingdom to the elder brother. Euryſtheus his nephew, king of Mycenæ, of the line of Perſeus, going againſt the Heraclides, or poſterity of Hercules, entruſted him with the government during his abſence. The expedition proved fatal to Euryſtheus; and the inhabitants of Mycenæ being afraid of a victorious tribe, and having proof of the ability of their governor Atreus, unanimouſly offered him the kingdom. Thus the family of Pelops got the poſſeſſion of two kingdoms, and became ſuperior in wealth and power to the Perſeids their rivals.

This Atreus ſeems to have been the firſt, who, after the days of Minos, had fitted out a fleet; for

> The wiſe and witty then forſook the field,
> And firſt for ſafety towns began to build,
> By nature kings: ——
> Then cattle too was ſhared; then ſteady bounds
> Mark'd out to every man his proper grounds:
> Each had his proper ſhare, each what was fit,
> According to his beauty, ſtrength, or wit.
>
> CREECH.

[a] Peloponneſus or Pelop's iſland.

beſides a large and flouriſhing kingdom on the continent, he left to Agamemnon the ſovereignty of many of the iſlands, which could never be held in ſubjection without a naval force. They had been early enriched, as hath been obſerved above, by commerce with Syria, Phœnicia, and Egypt, the firſt civilized countries.

Agamemnon, poſſeſſed of this wide dominion and great wealth, as things then went, was more in a condition, than by the oaths ſworn to Tyndarus, to reſent his brother's wrongs, and to put himſelf at the head of the firſt expedition which Greece made in common againſt a foreign enemy[a]. But the length of the war, ere Troy was taken, and the misfortunes the Greeks met with in their return, brought new diſorders upon the victorious nation. Many of the princes being killed[b], and ſome of them loſt by the way, parties ſtarted up in the cities, and the Greeks fell to their old trade of one tribe expelling another, as formerly.

But now the contentions were longer and more obſtinate, and more blood was ſpilt before either ſide would ſubmit. Their cities were better worth fighting for, and were not eaſily given up by peo-

a Πρὸ γὰρ τῶν Τρωϊκῶν, etc. 'It does not appear that Greece 'attempted any thing with the united force of all the Greek 'nations before the Trojan war.' Thucydides, 1.

b Τῶν ἡγεμόνων, etc. 'Leitus was the only Boeotian gene-'ral who returned home from Troy.' Pauſanius, book 1.

ple grown expert in war. Nor did the tribe that was worſted wander up and down, as before, to ſeek new diſtant habitations; but they fortified their new cities, to ſecure themſelves and their poſterity againſt the like calamities. Thus for ſome ages after the taking of Troy, Greece was indeed increaſing in wealth, and number of inhabitants; but was continually engaged in wars; taking of towns, battles of tribes, piracy, and incurſions, were common adventures [a].

In the ſecond or third age of this period was Homer born; that is, "at a time when he might, as "he grew up, be a ſpectator of all the various ſitu-"ations of human race; might obſerve them in "great calamities, and in high felicity; but more "generally they were increaſing in wealth and "diſcipline." For I cannot help obſerving, that

[a] Μάλιστα μὲν οὖν, etc. 'It was chiefly therefore about the time of the Trojan war, and a little after it, that theſe invaſions happened, and interchangeable removes of different tribes; both Greeks and Barbarians being then hurried, as it were, by an impetuous ſpirit, to quit their own, and invade the poſſeſſions of their neighbours. But ſuch things as theſe happened likewiſe before the Trojan war: the nations and tribes of the Pelaſgi, the Caucones and the Leleges having lived much in the ſame unſettled manner: and I have already obſerved that the very ſame tribes were formerly wandering over many parts of Europe, whom yet the poet afterwards recounts among the nations, auxiliaries to Priam in Aſia, and yet does not mention their having then croſſed the Helleſpont, to go to his aſſiſtance.' Strabo, Book 12.

from theſe hard beginnings, and jarring intereſts, the Greeks became early maſters of the military art, and by degrees, of all others that tend to enrich or adorn a city, and raiſe a commonwealth: ſhipping and commerce, domeſtic order, and foreign influence, with every ſubſervient art of policy and government, were invented, or improved; and ſome of them brought to a very great degree of perfection.

And truly it could not be otherwiſe, while each city was independent, rivalling its neighbour, and trying its genius in peace, and its ſtrength in war [a]. Upon good or bad ſucceſs, the citizens, all concerned in the adminiſtration, made a careful enquiry into the cauſe of it; what fault in their conduct had procured the one, or what excellency in their conſtitution the other? This liberty produced hardineſs and diſcipline; which at length aroſe to that height, that ten thouſand Greeks were an overmatch for the Perſian monarch, with all the power of the Aſiatic plains.

This indeed happened long after; but the ſtruggle was freſh in Homer's days: arms were in re-

[a] Πᾶσα γὰρ ἡ Ἑλλὰς, etc. 'All the inhabitants of Greece 'went then conſtantly armed, becauſe their dwellings were 'not fortified, neither was there a ſafe communication or 'peaceable intercourſe between one tribe and another.' Thucydides, 1.

pute, and force decided poſſeſſion [a]. He ſaw towns taken and plundered, the men put to the ſword, and the women made ſlaves: he beheld their deſpairing faces, and ſuppliant poſtures; heard their moanings over their murdered huſbands, and prayers for their infants to the victor.

On the other hand, he might view cities bleſſed with peace, ſpirited by liberty, flouriſhing in trade, and increaſing in wealth. He was not engaged in affairs himſelf, to draw off his attention; but he wandered through the various ſcenes, and obſerved them at leiſure. Nor was it the leaſt inſtructive ſight, to ſee a colony led out, a city founded, the foundations of order and policy laid, with all the proviſions of the ſecurity of the people: ſuch ſcenes afford extended views, and natural ones too, as they are the immediate effect of the great parent of invention, Neceſſity, in its young and untaught eſſays.

The importance of this good fortune will beſt appear, if we reflect on the pleaſure which ariſes from a repreſentation of natural and ſimple manners: it is irreſiſtible and inchanting; they beſt ſhew human wants and feelings; they give us back

[a] Homer ſays to Antiope, Καὶ ῥ' ἴτην, etc. —
Two ſons ſhe bore, Zethus and Amphion,
Who founded firſt the ſeat of ſeven-gate Thebes,
And wall'd it round; becauſe unfortify'd,
Though bold and ſtrong, they could not dwell in Thebes.
Odyſſ.

the emotions of an artleſs mind, and the plain methods we fall upon to indulge them: goodneſs and honeſty have their ſhare in the delight; for we begin to love the men, and would rather have to do with them, than with more refined but double characters. Thus the various works, neceſſary for building a houſe, or a ſhip; for planting a field, or forging a weapon, if deſcribed with an eye to the ſentiments and attention of the man ſo employed, give us great pleaſure, becauſe we feel the ſame. Innocence, we ſay, is beautiful; and the ſketches of it, wherever they are truly hit off, never fail to charm: witneſs the few ſtrokes of that nature in Mr. Dryden's Conqueſt of Mexico, and the Inchanted Iſland.

Accordingly, we find Homer deſcribing very minutely the houſes, tables, and way of living of the antients; and we read theſe deſcriptions with pleaſure. But on the contrary, when we conſider our own cuſtoms, we find that our firſt buſineſs, when we ſit down to poetize in the higher ſtrains, is to unlearn our daily way of life; to forget our manner of ſleeping, eating, and diverſions: we are obliged to adopt a ſet of more natural manners, which however are foreign to us; and muſt be like plants raiſed up in hot-beds or green houſes, in compariſon of thoſe which grow in ſoils fitted by nature for ſuch productions. Nay, ſo far are we from enriching poetry with new images drawn from

nature, that we find it difficult to underſtand the old. We live within doors, covered, as it were, from nature's face; and paſſing our days ſupinely ignorant of her beauties. We are apt to think the ſimilies taken from her low, and the antient manners mean, or abſurd. But let us be ingenuous, my Lord, and confeſs, that while the moderns admire nothing but pomp, and can think nothing great or beautiful, but what is the produce of wealth, they exclude themſelves from the pleaſanteſt and moſt natural images that adorn the old poetry. State and form diſguiſe men; and wealth and luxury diſguiſe nature. Their effects in writing are anſwerable: a lord-mayor's ſhow, or grand proceſſion of any kind, is not very delicious reading, if deſcribed minutely, and at length; and great ceremony is at leaſt equally tireſome in a poem, as in ordinary converſation.

It has been an old complaint, that we love to diſguiſe every thing, and moſt of all ourſelves. All our titles and diſtinctions have been repreſented as coverings, and additions of grandeur to what nature gave us[a]: happy indeed for the beſt ends, I

[a] *Quel ſuon faſtoſo e vano*, etc.
That idle ſupplement of worth,
That vain pretence to fame,
By vulgar fools ſet forth
With honour's ſacred name:

mean the public tranquillity and good order; but incapable of giving delight in fiction or poetry.

By this time, your lordſhip ſees I am in the caſe of a noble hiſtorian; who, having related the conſtant ſuperiority his Greeks had over the inhabitants of the Aſſyrian vales, concludes, "That it has "not been given by the Gods, to one of the ſame "country, to produce rich crops and warlike "men[a]:" neither indeed does it ſeem to be given to one and the ſame kingdom, to be thoroughly civilized, and afford proper ſubjects for poetry.

The marvellous and wonderful is the nerve of the epic ſtrain: but what marvellous things happen in a well-ordered ſtate? We can hardly be ſurprized; we know the ſprings and method of acting; every thing happens in order, and according to cuſtom or law. But in a wide uncivilized country, not under a regular government, or ſplit into many, whoſe inhabitants live ſcattered, and ignorant of laws and diſcipline; in ſuch a country, the manners are ſimple, and accidents will happen every day: expoſition and loſs of infants, encounters, eſcapes, reſcues, and every other thing that can

The empty ſound which lulls mankind,
With fawning titles, flattery and deceit,
Had not become a tool of ſtate,
Nor ruled the tyrant of the human mind.
GUARINI's Paſtor Fido.

[a] Herodotus.

inflame the human paſſions while acting, or awake them when deſcribed, and recalled by imitation.

Theſe are not to be found in a well-governed ſtate, except it be during the time of a civil war, when it ceaſes to be ſo: and yet, with all the diſorder and miſery that attends that laſt of ills, the period while it rages is fitter for an epic poem, than the moſt glorious campaign that ever was made in Flanders. Even the things that give the greateſt luſtre in a regular government; the greateſt honours and higheſt truſts, will ſcarcely bear poetry: the muſe refuſes to beſtow her embelliſhments on a duke's patent, or a general's commiſſion. They can neither raiſe our wonder, nor gain our heart: for peace, harmony, and good order, which make the happineſs of a people, are the bane of a poem that ſubſiſts by wonder and ſurprize.

To be convinced of this, we need only ſuppoſe that the Greeks, at the time of the Trojan war, had been a nation eminent for loyalty and diſcipline: that commiſſions in due form had been iſſued out, regiments raiſed, arms and horſes bought up, and a complete army ſet on foot. Let us ſuppoſe that all ſucceſs had attended them in their expedition; that every officer had vied with another in bravery againſt the foe, and in ſubmiſſion to his general: that in conſequence of theſe preparations, and of this good order, they had at firſt onſet routed the Trojans, and driven them into the town: ſuppoſe

this, and I think,—What will become of the glorious Iliad? The wrath of Achilles, the wiſdom of Neſtor, the bravery of Diomedes, and the craft of Ulyſſes will vaniſh in a moment. But matters are managed quite otherwiſe;

Seditione, dolis, ſcelere, atque libidine et ira,
Iliacos intra muros peccatur, et extra.

It is thus that a people's felicity clips the wings of their verſe: it affords few materials for admiration or pity; and though the pleaſure ariſing from the ſublimer kinds of writing, may make us regret the ſilence of the muſes, yet I am perſuaded your lordſhip will join in the wiſh, "That we may ne-"ver be a proper ſubject of an heroic poem."

But now that I have ventured ſo far, I begin to apprehend that I ſhall be deſerted. The habit of reconciling extremes, when a public concern calls for attention, is become ſo natural to your Lordſhip, that it muſt incline you to wiſh our epic affairs not ſo deſperate; and your knowlege of the poetical privilege will immediately ſuggeſt, "That "our private manners, it is poſſible, admit no ſuch "repreſentation: nor will our mercenary wars, "and ſtate intrigues, receive the ſtamp of ſimpli-"city and heroiſm:" But why may not a poet feign? Cannot he counterfeit manners, and contrive accidents, as he ſees good? Is he not intitled to ſhift ſcenes, and introduce perſons and characters

at pleaſure? Let him but exerciſe his prerogative, and all will be well: our manners need be no impediment; he will give his new raiſed generation what turn and caſt he pleaſes.

Though this ſeems to promiſe fair, yet in the end, I am afraid, it will not hold good. Your Lordſhip will judge whether my fears are juſt, when relying on that penetration which attends your opinions, I venture to affirm, "That a poet deſcribes "nothing ſo happily, as what he has ſeen; nor "talks maſterly, but in his native language, and "proper idiom; nor mimics truly other manners, "than thoſe whoſe originals he has practiſed and "known[a]."

This maxim will, no doubt, appear ſevere; and yet, I believe, upon enquiry it will hold true in fact. If we caſt an eye backward upon antiquity, it will be found, that none of the original writers have excelled, but where they ſpoke of the things they were moſt converſant with, and in the language and dialect they conſtantly uſed[b]. The ſatyrical buffooniſh temper of Archilochus is well known; nor is it a ſecret, that he indulged his paſſions, which were neither weak nor few. The

[a] See the note, page 39.

[b] As for the poets in particular, ſays Cervantes, *En reſolucion, todos los poetas*, etc. 'All the antient poets wrote in the language which they ſucked in with their milk, and did not ſeek foreign tongues in order to expreſs their ſublime conceptions' Don Quixote, part 2. book 5. chap. 16.

ſententious writings of Euripides, and Menander's polite pictures of life, repreſented their daily converſation. Plato's admired dialogues are but corrected tranſcripts of what paſſed in the academy: and Lucilius, preferred by ſome Romans to all that ever wrote[a], wrote himſelf juſt as he ſpoke. Herodotus's hiſtory ſhows the traveller, Thucydides's the politician, Dionyſius's the ſcholar, Xenophon's the captain and the philoſopher, as truly as they acted thoſe characters in their lives: nor could theſe heroes have excelled each in his different way, had they done otherwiſe.

But the truth of this maxim will beſt appear, if we obſerve its influence in converſation and behaviour. He who affects no other than his natural manners, has a better chance to excel, than if he ſhould attempt to copy another man's way, though perhaps preferable both in language and geſture to his own. It is a ſmall circle of acquaintance, which does not afford ſome diverting proofs of this common miſtake: and if it was not a diſagreeable occupation, to blame and find fault, it were eaſy to produce many inſtances of the ſame miſcarriage in writing. I will only put your Lordſhip in mind of two great men, who, with every thing beſides to

[a] *Lucilius quoſdam ita deditos*, etc. 'Lucilius, the firſt Roman ſatiriſt, who wrote juſt as he ſpoke, has admirers ſo devoted to him, that they do not ſtick to prefer him to all the poets that ever were in the world.' Quintilian.

recommend them, have ſplit upon this ſingle rock; and for that reaſon, as well as their being dead near two hundred years ago, they may be mentioned with leſs reluctancy. The perſons I mean are both Italians, who had the happineſs to ſee the golden age of learning in that country, the pontificat of Leo X.

Pietro Bembo was of a noble family in Venice; his early merit recommended him to Leo, who loved to fill his court with learned men, and had a true judgment in ſuch things himſelf. Bembo was made ſecretary for the apoſtolic briefs; and, after two ſucceſſions to the pontificat, was raiſed to the dignity of the purple, chiefly for his reputation in literature: and indeed his learning and abilities are unqueſtionable. But at the ſame time, this great man, admiring only the Roman eloquence and manners, wrote a hiſtory of his own country, ſo much upon the model of a Latin annal, that not only the general turn and caſt of the work is ſervilely copied, but the peculiarities of their ſtile, their computation of miles and time, and the forms of their religion and government, are with infinite labour wrought into a Venetian ſtory. The effect of it is, to enervate and deaden his work, which a writer of half his knowlege and accompliſhments, would have told better without his affectation.

A little younger than the cardinal was Giovanni Giorgio Triſſino, a native of Vicenza. He was

looked upon as one of the greateſt maſters of antient learning, both Greek and Roman, of his age; and, which rarely happens, was bleſt at the ſame time with a flow of Tuſcan eloquence. A man, ſo qualified, eaſily ſaw the faults of his contemporary writers; and thought it not impoſſible, with his talents and judgment, "To produce ſuch a poem "in Italian, as Homer had done in Greek."

He ſet about it, and placed his great model before his eyes: he abandoned the uſe of rhyme, followed the natural run of ſpeech in his verſe; and endeavoured to adapt his inventions to the ſtate and temper of his age and nation. He took Italy for the ſubject of his poem, as Homer had taken Greece: he has champions of the ſame country, as Homer has Grecian heroes: he uſes angels for his divinities, and ſupplies the antient furies with modern devils: in his geography, as Homer deſcribed Greece, and chiefly Theſſaly; Triſſino deſcribes Italy, and dwells on Lombardy. He has even attempted fable, and interwoven allegorical ſtories of life and morals, with the body of the narration. But after all, the native Italian manners are loſt; and the high ſpirit and ſecret force which bewitches a reader, and dazzles his eyes, that he can ſee no faults in Dante and Arioſto, is here cruſhed by imitation. Its fate has been anſwerable: the Italia Liberata, for ſo he calls his poem, being no more read or known, than Chapelain's Pucelle would be with-

out Boileau, or Sir R***'s A***d without the D***. Triſſino owes his fame to his Sophoniſba, a tragedy, and to his Miſcellanies; and the cardinal is preſerved from oblivion by his Letters and Love-verſes; and there too, the ſame inclination to copy has made him check his natural fire, that he might attain Cicero's elegance in the one, and Petrarcha's purity and ſoftneſs in the other.

To ſay the truth, my Lord, we are born but with narrow capacities: our minds are not able to maſter two ſets of manners, or comprehend with facility different ways of life[a]. Our company, education, and circumſtances make deep impreſſions, and form us into a character, of which we can hardly diveſt ourſelves afterwards. The manners not only of the age and nation in which we live, but of our city and family, ſtick cloſely to us, and betray us at every turn, when we try to diſſemble, and would paſs for foreigners. Theſe we underſtand, and can paint to perfection; and there is no one ſo undiſcerning, as not to ſee, how happy we have been in deſcribing thoſe parts of modern life we have undertaken. Was there ever a more natural picture than *the way of the world?* or can any

[a] Καὶ ἔτι γε τυτῶν, etc. 'The human genius is, if I 'may uſe the expreſſion, clipped or coined, into ſtill a 'ſmaller compaſs than what I have mentioned; ſo as neither 'to be able to imitate many different things perfectly, nor 'to act the things themſelves, of which theſe imitations are 'copies or reſemblances.' PLATO's Repub. book 3.

thing in its kind ſurpaſs *the rape of the lock?* The authors, doubtleſs, perfectly knew the life and manners they were painting, and ſucceeded accordingly.

Here then was Homer's firſt happineſs: he took his plain natural images from life; he ſaw warriors, and ſhepherds, and peaſants, ſuch as he drew; and was daily converſant among ſuch people as he intended to repreſent: the manners uſed in the Trojan times were not diſuſed in his own: the ſame way of living in private, and the ſame purſuits in public were ſtill prevalent, and gave him a model for his deſign, which would not allow him to exceed the truth in his draught. By frequently and freely looking it over, he could diſcern what parts of it were fit to be repreſented, and what to be paſſed over [a].

For ſo unaffected and ſimple were the manners of thoſe times, that the folds and windings of the human breaſt lay open to the eye; people were not as yet taught to be aſhamed of themſelves and their natural appetites, nor conſequently to diſſemble them: they made no ſcruple of owning the inclinations of their heart, and openly indulged their paſſions, which were entirely void of art and deſign [b]. This was

[a] ——————— Et quae
Deſperat tractata niteſcere poſſe, relinquit. HOR.

[b] Bold Homer durſt not ſo great virtue feign
In his beſt pattern: of Patroclus ſlain,
With ſuch amazement as weak mothers uſe,
And frantic geſture, he receives the news. WALLER.

Homer's happineſs, with reſpect to mankind, and the living part of his poetry: as for the other parts, and what a painter would call ſtill-life, he could have little advantage over the moderns: for we are not to imagine, that he could diſcover the entertaining proſpects, or rare productions of a country better than we can. That is a ſubject ſtill remaining to us, if we will quit our towns, and look upon it: we find it, accordingly, nobly executed by many of the moderns, and the moſt illuſtrious inſtance of it, within theſe few years, doing honour to the Britiſh poetry [a].

In ſhort, it may be ſaid of Homer, and of every poet who has wrote well, "That what he felt and "ſaw, that he deſcribed; and that Homer had the "good fortune to ſee and learn the Grecian man-"ners, at their true pitch and happieſt temper for "verſe:" had he been born much ſooner, he could have ſeen nothing but nakedneſs and barbarity: had he come much later, he had fallen either in times of peace, when a wide and ſettled policy prevailed over Greece; or in general wars, regularly carried on by civilized ſtates, when private paſſions are buried in the common order, and eſtabliſhed diſcipline.

[a] The Seaſons, by Mr. Thomſon.

SECT. III.

WHOEVER reflects upon the riſe and fall of ſtates, will find, that along with their manners, their language too accompanies them both in their growth and decay. Language is the conveyance of our thoughts; and as they are noble, free, and undiſturbed, our diſcourſe will keep pace with them both in its caſt and materials. By this means a convention of men of ſpirit and underſtanding, who have the buſineſs of a city or ſtate to manage (if they are not to receive their orders in ſilence from a ſuperior) will naturally produce ſpeakers and eloquence. The ſame men, if they quit their town, and look abroad, will ſpeak of the objects preſented to them by nature's face, with the ſame freedom and happineſs of expreſſion: and if, in a wide country, there are many ſuch ſocieties, ſpeaking the ſame tongue, but in different dialects; the language will reap the benefit, and be enriched with new words, phraſes, and metaphors, according to the temper and genius of the ſeveral people: while at the ſame time, each approve their own, becauſe it is uſed by their governors in their own independent ſtate.

It is a little ſurprizing to obſerve, what a con-

temptible figure the beginnings of the human race make in the pictures drawn of them by the antients:

Cum prorepſerunt primis animalia terris,
Mutum et turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter,
Unguibus et pugnis, dein fuſtibus, atque ita porro
Pugnabant armis, quae poſt fabricaverat uſus;
Donec verba, quibus voces ſenſuſque notarent,
Nominaque invenere. ——— [a].

They thought, it would ſeem, that language was the firſt tamer of men [b], and took its origin to have been certain rude accidental ſounds, which that naked company of ſcrambling mortals emitted by chance [c].

[a] Horat. Sat. iii. lib. 1.

[b] Ἐγγινομένου δ' ἀμῶν τοῦ, etc. 'By means of that faculty, 'which is implanted in us, to perſuade one another, and to 'declare mutually the inclinations of our minds, we were 'not only delivered from our firſt wild and brutal way of liv-'ing, but having entered into ſocieties, we founded cities, 'eſtabliſhed laws, and invented arts: and in ſhort almoſt all 'the inventions of men are owing to the power of ſpeech.' ISOCRATES.

[c] Τὰς δ' ἐξ ἀρχῆς γενομένας, etc. 'It is ſaid, that the firſt 'men, who appeared in the world, lived in a wild and diſor-'derly manner; and, like the beaſts of the woods, uſed to 'range about in queſt of food; they ſuſtained themſelves 'with herbs of the mildeſt taſte they could find, and with ſuch 'fruits as the trees afford without culture: taught by neceſ-'ſity, they ran to one another's aſſiſtance when attacked by 'the wild beaſts; and the voice or ſounds which they uttered, 'being at firſt confuſed, and of no ſignification, by little and 'little they learned to articulate their words.' DIODORUS SICULUS, Biblioth. book 1.

Upon this ſuppoſition, it will follow, that at firſt they uttered theſe ſounds in a much higher note than we do our words now; occaſioned, perhaps, by their falling on them under ſome paſſion, fear, wonder, or pain [a]; and then uſing the ſame ſound, either when the object or accident recurred, or when they wanted to deſcribe it by what they felt from its preſence: neither the ſyllables, nor the tone could be aſcertained; but when, prompted by the return of the paſſions, under which they invented them, they extended their throats, and put ſeveral of theſe vocal marks together, they would then ſeem to ſing. Hence αυδαειν ſignified at firſt ſimply *to ſpeak* or utter the voice, which now, with a ſmall abbreviation, αδειν, ſignifies *to ſing*: and hence came the antient opinion, which appears ſo ſtrange to us, "That poetry was before proſe."

The geographer Strabo, a wiſe man, and well acquainted with antiquity, tells us, that Cadmus, Pherecydes, and Hecatæus, firſt took the numbers, and the meaſure from ſpeech, and reduced that to proſe which had always been poetry before. And

[a] Καὶ γὰρ ἐικὸς ἀνθρώπους, etc. 'It is probable that the firſt 'want of words, and neceſſity of articulate ſpeech, aroſe a-'mong men, when they had a mind to explain and point out 'to one another the things that happened to them; and to 'ſignify who were the perſons concerned; and chiefly when 'they had the paſſions and diſaſters of life to deſcribe, and 'were to tell who had ſuffered the ſediſaſters.' PLUTARCH. PLATONIC. queſt.

the admired judge of the ſublime, in the fragment of a treatiſe we have unhappily loſt, has this remarkable ſentence:

"Meaſure, ſays he, belongs properly to poetry, "as it perſonates the various paſſions and their "language; uſes fiction and fables, which natu-"rally produce numbers and harmony; it was for "this reaſon, that the antients in their ordinary "diſcourſe delivered themſelves rather in verſe than "proſe[a]."

Had I to do with ſome others, I ſhould be at the pains to ſhew the connexion of the firſt and laſt part of this opinion; but your Lordſhip will eaſily ſee, that he thought the life of the antients was more expoſed to accidents and dangers, than when cities were built, and men were protected by ſociety and a public; and of conſequence that their diſcourſe muſt be more paſſionate and metaphorical. Give me leave only to add, that the compoſition of the names of TRAGEDY and COMEDY, which were repreſentations of antient life (Τραγῳδία, Κωμῳδία,) undoubtedly prove that they were originally ſung when acted, and not repeated, as they are now. Nor do I in the leaſt queſtion, but that the firſt things which were committed to writing in Greece, as oracles, laws, ſpells, prophecies, were in verſe; and yet they got the ſimple name of Ἔπεα, *words* or

[a] Μᾶλλον δὲ πρέπειν τὸ μέτρον, etc. LONGIN.

ſayings[a]; as the firſt Romans, for the ſame reaſon, called them FATA, from a verb ſignifying to *utter*

[a] Some veſtiges of this poetic turn remain in the pictures of eaſtern manners, that are preſerved in the oldeſt accounts of the Moors and Spaniards; where the Romanzes occur every other page, and the converſations upon paſſionate ſubjects run into a looſe kind of verſe: for example,

Abenamar! Abenamar!
Moro de la Moreria!
El dia que tu naciſte,
Grandes Senales avia:
Eſtava la Mar en Calma,
La Luna eſtava crecida;
Moro que en tal Signo nace
No dive dezir Mentira.

Abenamar! thou'rt a Moor,
Of the noble Mooriſh race;
When thy mother ſuch thee bore,
Mighty ſigns that day took place:
On that day the ſea was calm;
On the full moon too it fell;
In ſuch ſigns whoſe birth is fallen,
No untruth ſhould ever tell.

And this, of the ſame kind;

Reduan! Si ſe te acuerda
que me diſte la Palabra.
Que me darias a Jaën
en una noche ganada:
Reduan! Si tu lo cumples
darte paga doblada:
Y ſi tu no lo cumplieſſes
deſterrarte hé de Granada.

Reduan! thou muſt remember
How thou plighted haſt thy word,
To make the city Iân ſurrender
In a night won by thy ſword.

the voice or *to ſpeak*[a]. But however theſe things be, it is certain, that the primitive parts of the languages reputed original, are many of them rough, undeclined, imperſonal monoſyllables; expreſſive commonly of the higheſt paſſions, and moſt ſtriking objects that preſent themſelves in ſolitary ſavage life[b].

Reduan! if thou prevail,
Then I'll double all thy pay:
But, Reduan, if thou wilt fail,
In Granade thou muſt not ſtay.
Hiſt. of the Civil Wars of Granada.

Theſe Romanzes are ſo old, that they are brought by the Arabs as the proofs of their hiſtories.

[a] FARI: the word derived from it was not uſed ſingle at firſt; but they commonly called thoſe things FATA JOVIS, I believe from the old oracle in Dodona, ſacred to Jupiter. So Virgil, the great imitator of antient language, *Et ſic Fata Jovis poſcunt*, Æneid vi. Though afterwards, from the import of the ſubject, it came to bear the preſent ſignification. The Greeks, when they begun to affect accuracy, made the compound of the ſingle word Φάτα, and called it Θίσφατα; not only *ſayings*, but *ſayings of the God*, Θεὸς φάτα.

[b] As this way of tracing a language places it in an uncommon light, it will be proper to illuſtrate it by a few ſuch examples, as are moſt connected with ordinary life. The two uſual words in Hebrew for meat and food, *Lechom* and *Tereph*, ſignify, at the ſame time, the one *fighting*, and the other *rapine* or *plunder*. *Gur* ſignifies to *go abroad*, to *travel*; and the adjunct of it to *dread*, to *be in fear*: and *Ger* or *Gur*, a *ſtranger* and a young *lion*. The old word for *wealth* in Greek, Λεία, means nothing originally but *ſpoil*, the product of war and piracy; and comes from Λάω, *abigo*, whence the word in uſe, ἐλαύνω, forms its tenſes: and the great variety of words they have to ſignify *good* and *better*, take their original from *ſtrength* and *violence*. This colluſion of different ſignifications

From this deduction, it is plain, that any language, formed as above described, must be full of metaphor; and that metaphor of the boldest, daring, and most natural kind: for words taken wholly from rough nature, and invented under some passion, as terror, rage, or want (which readily extort sounds from men [a],) would be expressive of that fanaticism and dread, which is incident to

to the same word, which is observable throughout the original languages, must be very convincing to such as are acquainted with their idiom and propriety. The constant reason of them is, the connexion which these various meanings had in the manners then prevalent. Some of these connexions are vanished in a civilized life and change of manners: others of them still remain; such as *Zonah, caupona, hospita*; and *Zonah, scortum, meretrix*. *Hhashar, to grow rich*, and *Hhasar, to receive tythes, to be a priest*; with a hundred more of the same kind. But it gives us an idea of a dismal way of living, to find the word *Karab*, that signifies *to draw near to one, to approach*, signify, at the same time, *to fight, to make war*; and thence the word *Kerah, a battle*. It puts me in mind of the horrible image given us by Orpheus,

Ἦν χρόνος ἡνίκα φῶτες ἀπ' ἀλλήλων βίον εἶχον
Σαρκοδακῆ· κρεισσων δὲ τ' ἥττονα φῶτα δαΐζε.
Σέξτ. Ἐμπειρικῦ πρὸς Μαθημ. βιϛ. β.

Father Ricci, in his Christian Expedition to China, says expresly, that their language consists wholly in monosyllables: the same seems to have been the case of the antient Egyptian; and, as we may observe ourselves, of the greatest part of the northern tongues.

a *At varios linguae sonitus natura subegit*
Mittere; et utilitas expressit nomina rerum.
——— ——— Nature first taught
The human tongue to form its various sounds,
And eager want extorted every name. LUCRET.

creatures living wild and defenceleſs[a]: we muſt imagine their ſpeech to be broken, unequal, and boiſterous; one word or ſound, according to its analogy to different ideas, would ſtand for them all; a quality we often miſtake for ſtrength and expreſſion, while it is a real defect.

But let us take another ſtep, and ſuppoſe the affairs of the rude community to be a little advanced; that they begin to underſtand their own gibberiſh, live in tolerable ſecurity, and are at liberty to look around them: in that caſe, admiration and wonder will ſucceed. Wonder is the proper paſſion of raw and unexperienced mortals, when rid of fear. The great critic among the antients has aſſigned it to young men: a witty modern of the laſt age gives it to the ladies; and one of the fineſt pieces written in our language confines it to fools.

It is certain, that in the infancy of ſtates, the

[a] *Nam fuit quoddam tempus*, etc. "There was a time when 'mankind, like the beaſts, ſtrayed wild in the woods, and were 'ſuſtained by the ſame ſort of food as the beaſts feed upon. 'Hardly did they manage any thing by art or contrivance, 'but all by ſtrength of body and plain force. No inſtitution of religion, nor precept of human duty was known or 'regarded: no regular legal matrimony between the ſexes; 'nor had any man yet ſeen children whom he could call his 'own. The benefits of property ſecured by equal law were 'not heard of: ſo that blind deſire being uncontrouled in 'their minds, hurried them on through a maze of ignorance, 'and to accompliſh its ends uſed nothing but the moſt pernicious of all methods, open violence.' CICERO, of Invention, book 1.

men generally reſemble the public conſtitution: they have only that turn which the rough culture of accidents, perhaps diſmal enough, through which they have paſſed, could give them: they are ignorant and undeſigning, governed by fear, and ſuperſtition its companion: there is a vaſt void in their minds; they know not what will happen, nor according to what tenour things will take their courſe: every new object finds them unprepared; they gaze and ſtare, like infants taking in their firſt ideas of light [a]: their words expreſs their feelings; and as there is a mighty diſtance from this ſtarting-place of ignorance and wonder, to the condition of a wiſe experienced man, whom few things ſurprize; who is acquainted with the fates of nations, and the laws and limits of our ſituation, the language is tinctured in proportion, and bears the marks of the intermediate ſtages.

[a] Οἳ πρῶτα μὲν βλέποντες, etc.
In early times, men ſeeing, ſaw in vain;
Hearing, they heard not; but like empty forms
Of fleeting dreams, they dragg'd their vagrant life,
By chance, through good or bad. —
ESCHYLUS's Prometheus.

This account of the firſt mortals is confirmed by the learned and ſagacious philoſopher, Εἰκός τι τὺς πρώτυς, etc. 'It is 'probable that the firſt men, whether produced from the 'earth, or eſcaped from ſome general deſolation, were all 'much of the ſame kind; low, vulgar people, without un-'derſtanding; in the ſame way as we commonly characterize 'thoſe we call ſprung from the earth.' ARISTOT. Politic. book 2.

It were eaſy to prove theſe aſſertions by abundance of grammatical examples, but they can only be underſtood by men, who, like your Lordſhip, have it in their power to recollect them at pleaſure. I will only obſerve, that the Turks, Arabs, Indians, and in general moſt of the inhabitants of the eaſt, are a ſolitary kind of people: they ſpeak but ſeldom, and never long without emotion: but when, in their own phraſe, they open their mouth, and give a looſe to a fiery imagination, they are poetical, and full of metaphor. Speaking, among ſuch people, is a matter of ſome moment, as we may gather from their uſual introductions; for before they begin to deliver their thoughts, they give notice, "that they will open their mouth; that "they will unlooſe their tongue; that they will "utter their voice, and pronounce with their "lips[a]." Theſe preambles bear a great reſemblance to the old forms of introduction in Homer, Heſiod, and Orpheus, in which they are ſometimes followed by Virgil.

If there is then an inviolable and neceſſary connexion between the diſpoſitions of a nation and their ſpeech, we muſt believe that there will be an alloy of ſimplicity and wonder in the beginnings of every language; and likewiſe that the dialect will improve

[a] See the Arabian nights entertainment; a tranſlation from the Arabic.

with the affairs and genius of the people. Upon a nearer view of that which Homer ſpoke, we find it not original, but derived from others more antient: yet it ſeems to have begun upon a very ſmall ſtock, which the Pelaſgi ſpoke [a], and the old inhabitants of the northern parts of Greece. The greater part of its acquiſitions it drew from Aſia, Phœnicia, and Egypt, by the way of Cyprus and Crete [b]: theſe, with the other iſlands, poſſeſſed chiefly by the Carians, were firſt peopled and inſtructed in the arts of life: they lie moſt conveniently for merchants ſailing from the above-named countries; and it was either trading people, or perſons under a neceſſity of travelling abroad for ſome bold actions at home [c], who were the firſt inſtructors of the antient Greeks [*].

[a] Τῦ γηγενοῦς γὰρ εἰμ' ἐγὼ παλαίχθονος, etc.
From great Pelaſgus, antient and earth-born,
I draw my high deſcent, this nation's founder.
And the Pelaſgic tribe, juſtly ſo call'd
From my great ſire, poſſeſſes all this land:
My ſway extends whence Algus rolls his ſtream,
And limpid Strymon, to the ſetting ſun.
ESCHYLUS's Supplicants.

[b] (Κρητὴ νῆσος) πάσῃ ἐπικεῖται, etc. 'The iſland Crete is 'ſtretched out towards many ſeas; the Greeks being almoſt 'wholly ſettled upon the maritime coaſts.' ARIST. Politic. book 2.

[c] Danaus, Cadmus, *etc.* See the Marmora Arundel. Epoch. 9. concerning the Πεντηκόντορος: and the following note.

[*] Τὸν μὲν ἐπίκαιρα χρόνον, etc. 'In the age when theſe things 'happened, that is, when the weſtern parts of Europe receiv-'ed the greateſt improvements, the men who were under the

These adventurers came to a climate which inclines not men to solitude, and forbids idleness: the necessity of labour and contrivance; a growing commerce, and, more than any thing besides, the number of independent governments, and rival cities, soon raised a nobler language than any of the originals. It was at first simple, unconfined, and free, as was their life: the politic stile grew with their constitution; and was at its height when they had most affairs of that kind, and of the greatest consequence to manage: and when a rough warlike people had stripped them of their liberty, they had recourse to philosophy and learning. The councils of a free state are managed by speaking, which quickly introduces eloquence, and the arts of persuasion: when these turn useless, or dangerous in public, men betake themselves to less obnoxious subjects.

These were the stages through which the Greek language passed. It went through them slowly, and had time to receive the impression of each: It lasted long, and far out-lived the Latin, as it had begun before: the reason was, that amidst all the

'public displeasure in Asia, Egypt, or the other barbarous 'countries, came to Greece; and both pretended to, and ob-'tained the government of the chief Grecian cities. Thus 'Danaus, being banished from Egypt, came and possessed 'Argos; Cadmus, from Sidon, reigned over Thebes: the 'Carians were possessed of the islands in the Archipelago; 'and Pelops the son of Tantalus was master of the whole Pe-'loponnesus.' ISOCRATES.

broils of Greece, they had ſtill liberty and employment enough, either in buſineſs or literature, to keep alive ſomething of their ſpirit and language: That will alway follow our fortunes, and be fitted to our affairs and condition [a]. For, in fact, what elſe do we talk of? For this reaſon, a flouriſhing happy nation, not over-diſciplined at the beginning, that after a long ſtruggle, and much trial, comes to excel in every art of peace and war; ſuch a nation muſt ſpeak the nobleſt language; which, in its turn, becauſe of the inſtability of human affairs, has no ſecurity for its duration.

After ſuch a deduction, your Lordſhip is no doubt in expectation, what is at length to be made of it? It is this, my Lord, "That when by the "progreſſion above-mentioned, the Greek lan"guage was brought to expreſs all the beſt and "braveſt of the human feelings, and retained a "ſufficient quantity of its original, amazing, me"taphoric tincture; at that point of time did Ho"mer write."

I know nothing more proper to convince us of the truth of this happy circumſtance, than the conſideration of the machines he employs: the greater part of them are natural; and except the Egyptian and Orphic allegories (which he uſually puts in the mouth of his Gods [b]) they are told in the prevailing

[a] *Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem*
Fortunarum habitum ——— HORAT. ad Piſon.

[b] When the poet mentions them in his own perſon, he commonly introduces them with φασὶ, *they ſay*.

language of the country. It is given as a rule in poetry[a], "to ſtrip the common accidents of life of "their plain dreſs, and aſcribe them to ſome ſupe-"rior power, in order to keep up their dignity; as "for inanimate things, we muſt give them life, "clothe them with a perſon, and proper attri-"butes:" But few people imagine that the ordinary language wore this metaphorical habit at that time. Yet it would be inexcuſable elſe, to put poetical expreſſions in the mouth of any other than the poet himſelf: it would be really falſe writing, and is a common fault in many excellent performances. Homer's grand copier, who has wrought one wonderful poem out of the other's two, ſeems, to a very candid judge, to have come ſhort of his original in this particular: it is the ingenious Monſ. De la Motte I ſpeak of, who thinks Eneas by far too great a poet; and owns, that he could not help feeling that impropriety through the whole of the ſecond and third books of the Eneid; where the hero is not leſs florid and figurative in his narration, than the poet himſelf is in the reſt[b].

Virgil's writing ſo long after Eneas's expedition, and in a language too refined for the manners then in uſe, makes this incongruity the more perceptible: but in the Trojan times, their ſpeech, as well as

[a] See Boileau's Art of poetry.

[b] Diſcours ſur l'Ode: & Reponſe a la xi reflection de Monſ. Deſpreaux ſur Longin.

their manners, retained much of the eaſtern caſt; their theology was a fable, and their moral inſtructions an allegorical tale. When Priam came to beg the body of his ſlaughtered ſon, Achilles comforts him with a parabolical ſtory concerning the two veſſels, out of which Jupiter diſpenſes to every man his proportion of good and evil [a]; and Glaucus tells Diomedes, "That like the leaves of "the trees, firſt ſpreading, and then decaying, ſo "are the generations of mortal men [b]."

SECT. IV.

NEXT to the originals from which a language is derived, the common manners under which it is formed, and the critical period of its duration, it is chiefly affected by the religion of a country, and the manners of the times. Theſe might have been included under the common manners of the nation; but their influence is great enough, particularly upon the turn and genius of the language, to deſerve a conſideration.

I ſhall ſoon have occaſion to make a ſtricter enquiry into the origin both of the Grecian religion and learning. At preſent it is ſufficient to ſay,

[a] Iliad. ω. [b] Iliad. ζ.

that they came from the great parent of ſacred and civil inſtitutions, the kingdom of Egypt. That wiſe people ſeem to have early obſerved the curbs of the human paſſions, and the methods of governing a large ſociety. The ſaw the general bent of mankind, to admire what they do not underſtand, and to ſtand in awe of unknown powers, which they fancy capable to do them great good or ill: they adapted their religious belief and ſolemn ceremonies, to this diſpoſition; made their rites myſterious, and delivered their allegorical doctrines under great ties of profound and pious ſecrecy.

Ω τεκνον! συ δε τοισι νοοισι πελαζεο, γλωσσην
Ευ μαλ' επικρατεων· στερνοισινδ' ενθεο φημην [a].

Now, thou my ſon! approach with mind intent,
And careful keep thy tongue: but in thy breaſt
Revolve theſe awful ſounds.———

Hence the number of monſtrous ſtories concerning their Gods, which the firſt Grecian ſages that travelled into Egypt certainly underſtood, and explained to their adepts [b], among whom, after ſome

[a] Ὀρφευς προς Μυσαιον. In Fragment. Ὀρφικων Επων.

[b] Diodorus the Sicilian, after having explained the natural ſignification of the allegory of Bacchus's being the ſon of Jupiter and Ceres, or wine's being the production of the earth and moiſture, adds theſe remarkable words, Συμφανη δε, etc. 'Of the ſame nature with theſe allegories are the things 'which are ſhadowed out in the poems of Orpheus; and likewiſe the things which are ſignified in the religious rites, (pre-

deſcents, I reckon Heſiod and Homer: but falling afterwards into hands of men of warm fancies, who thought they might invent as well as their maſters, there were many traditional ſtories tacked to the former; ſometimes untowardly enough, and ſometimes ſo as to make a tolerable piece of the literal relation, but confounding when applied to the allegory. Theſe are all the Ἱρὰ Λογια, *ſacred traditions*, mentioned ſo often by Herodotus, with a declaration that he will not venture to publiſh them; and of the ſame kind is the Θειος Λογος, *the divine tradition*, recommended by Orpheus to his favourite ſcholar, and quoted by a primitive father for another purpoſe[a].

This allegorical religion having been tranſplanted into Greece, found it a very proper ſoil for ſuch a plantation. It took deep root in the minds of the Greeks, who were groſly ignorant, and prepoſſeſſed with no rival opinions: they made additions to it of their own, and in few ages it was incorporated with their manners, mixed itſelf with their language, and gained univerſal belief. "Such was "its condition when Homer made his appearance "in the world: it had attained its vigour, and

ſcribed by the ſame perſon:) but it is not lawful for thoſe 'who are not initiated to enquire into the particular meaning 'of every rite.' Biblioth. book 3. Which plainly ſhews the nature and tendency of the Orphic rites.

[a] Εἰς δὲ Θειον Λογον βλέψας, τύτῳ προσίδρυε. 'Fixing thy eye upon the divine Tradition, attach thyſelf 'to it.' Juſtin Martyr. Λόγος παραινετικὸς πρὸς Ἕλληνας

" had not loſt the grace of novelty and youth:" This is the criſis, when every body affects to talk in the prevailing ſtile; which, joined with the early metaphorical caſt of the language, is one great reaſon of the conſtant allegory in the antient writings.

We have frequent examples, how much the firm belief of any ſect makes men ſpeak and write in the approved idiom: they introduce it into their buſineſs, allude to it in their pleaſures, and abſtain from it in no part of life; eſpecially while the doctrine flouriſhes, and appears in bloom; for your Lordſhip knows, that theſe things, among the antients, had their ſpring and ſummer as well as natural growths; and after a certain time, like a ſuperannuated plant, they turn ſcrubby and lifeleſs, were diſregarded by degrees, and at laſt vaniſhed.

What further advantages poetry might reap from a religion ſo framed, will appear afterwards[a]: let us now conſider the manners of the times; by which I underſtand the profeſſions and ſtudies that are in vogue, and bring moſt honour to thoſe who poſſeſs them in an eminent degree.

They likewiſe follow the fortunes of a nation: in the progreſſion above-mentioned, the arts of the greateſt uſe in life, I mean thoſe that ſupply our natural wants, and ſecure our perſons and properties, are the firſt that ennoble their inventers; and in proceſs of time, when wealth has made its entrance, the refiners of pleaſure, and contrivers of magnificence, draw our attention.

a See Section 9, 10.

From the accounts already given of the ſtate of Greece, it is eaſy to conclude, " That the firſt " muſt be ſtill prevalent when Homer lived;" a piece of good fortune that exempted him from the two vices, to whoſe charge the admired Longinus lays the fall of poetry; an inſatiable deſire of riches, and what he calls, ἀγεννεστατον Πάθος, *A mean diſpiriting paſſion*, the love of pleaſure[a].

In effect, arms at that time was the honoured profeſſion, and a public ſpirit the courted character: there was a neceſſity for them both. The man who had bravely defended his city, enlarged its dominion, or died in its cauſe, was revered like a god; love of liberty, and contempt of death, with their nobleſt conſequences, honour, probity, and temperance, were realities. There was, as I ſaid, a neceſſity for thoſe virtues[b]: no ſafety to life or fortune without them: for while every ſtate,

a Περὶ Ὑψοῦς. Τμήμα μδ. ζήτημα λαμπρόν.

b Ο γὰρ δὴ χρόνος ἐκεῖνος, (the age of Theſeus, a little before the Trojan war) ἤνεγκεν ἀνθρώπους, etc. 'Theſe early 'times produced men unwearied in toils, and almoſt ſuperna'turally robuſt, in feats of hand, ſwiftneſs of foot, and 'ſtrength of body; but who made no good or humane uſe of 'theſe wonderful endowments.—Inſult was their inclination, 'and violence their delight; their ſupreme ſtrength ſerved no 'other end, than to maſter and cruelly deſtroy every perſon 'and thing that fell in their way: but as for love to mankind, 'juſtice, equity, and humanity, theſe they thought were com'mended by the greater part only, becauſe they wanted cou'rage to do an injury, or were apprehenſive of receiving one: 'and therefore imagined that they had nothing to do with 'thoſe virtues, who were able to take by force whatever their 'heart deſired.' Plutarch's THESEUS.

that is to ſay, almoſt every city was envied by its warlike and encroaching neighbour, there was no choice, but either reſolutely to defend itſelf by dint of arms, or ſhamefully ſubmit to oppreſſion and ſlavery. "And no wonder if the man who learns "theſe virtues from neceſſity, and the things them-"ſelves, knows them better than ſchools and ſy-"ſtems can inſtruct him; and that the repreſenta-"tions of ſuch genuine characters bear the marks "of truth, and far outſhine thoſe taken from coun-"terfeit worth, or fainter parents."

Thus we find, that the fortunes, the manners, and the language of the people are all linked together, and neceſſarily influence one another. Men take their ſentiments from their fortunes; if they are low, it is their conſtant concern how to mend them; if they are eaſy, how to enjoy them: and according to this bent, they turn botht heir conduct and their converſation; and aſſume the language, air, and garb peculiar to the manner of the different characters.

In moſt of the Greek cities, policy and laws were but juſt a forming, when Homer came into the world[a]. The firſt ſketches of them were ex-

[a] They had no well digeſted body of laws, or plan of civil conſtitution, before Onomacritus. So Ariſtotle, Ὀνομακρίτου γενομένου, etc. 'Onomacritus was the firſt man who became ſkilful in framing a policy.' Politics, book 2.

tremely ſimple[a]; taking their riſe from the exigencies of the rude way of life then prevailing. The great law of hoſpitality made the chief part of the inſtitution: to violate a ſtranger, who had taken ſanctuary under your roof, had participated of your table, or ſat down by your fire, was made the higheſt, and moſt deteſtable impiety. The reſt were of a piece; generally prohibitions from violence, or ſuch regulations of manners as we ſhould think unneceſſary or barbarous. The tribes were but beginning to live ſecure within the walls of their new-fenced towns, and had as yet neither time nor ſkill to frame a domeſtic policy, or municipal laws; and far leſs to think of public methods of training up their citizens: they lived naturally, and were governed by the natural poiſe of the paſſions, as it is ſettled in every human breaſt. This made them ſpeak and act, without other reſtraint than their own native apprehenſions of good and evil, juſt and unjuſt, each as he was prompted from within. "Theſe manners afford the moſt natural pictures, "and proper words to paint them."

They have a peculiar effect upon the language, not only as they are natural, but as they are inge-

[a] Τὸις γὰρ ἀρχαίοις νόμοις, etc. 'The antient laws were extremely ſimple and barbarous: for the Greeks of old went 'conſtantly armed, and bought and ſold their wives one tribe 'from another; and all the remains of the antient legal 'eſtabliſhments up and down Greece are throughly ſimple, 'and adapted to rude uncivilized manners.' ARISTOT. Polit. book. 2.

nuous and good. While a nation continues ſimple and ſincere, whatever they ſay receives a weight from truth: their ſentiments are ſtrong and honeſt; which always produce fit words to expreſs them[a]: their paſſions are ſound and genuine, not adulterated or diſguiſed, and break out in their own artleſs phraſe and unaffected ſtile. They are not accuſtomed to the prattle, and little pretty forms that enervate a poliſhed ſpeech: nor are they over-run with quibble and ſheer-wit, with makes its appearance late in every country, and in Greece came long after the Trojan times. And this I take to be the reaſon, "Why moſt nations are ſo delighted with "their antient poets[b]:" before they are poliſhed into flattery and refined into falſhood, we feel the force of their words, and the truth of their thoughts.

In common life, no doubt, the witty facetious man is now the preferable character: but he is on-

[a] *Quin ipſe* [Tiberius] *compoſitus aliàs, etc.* 'Even Tiberius, 'the great diſſembler, who, at other times, was locked up and 'collected within himſelf, whoſe words ſeemed to come from 'him as it were ſtruggling for utterance, ſpoke with great 'eaſe and fluency, whenever he thought fit to be merciful, 'and pardon a criminal.' TACITUS.

[b] ——— *Graecorum ſunt antiquiſſima quaeque*
Scripta vel optima. ———
The oldeſt writers of the Grecian train
Are ſtill the beſt. ———
HOR. Let. to Auguſt.

ly a middling perſon, and no Hero[a]; bearing a perſonage for which there is hardly an inch of room in an epic poem. To be witty in a matter of conſequence, where the riſque is high, and the execution requires caution or boldneſs, is impertinence and buffoonry.

Virgil well knew the importance of this imitation of antient manners; and borrowed from Ennius his antiquated terms, and the ſtrong obſolete turn of his ſentences. Nay, he has adopted as many of the old forms uſed at ſacrifices, gems, conſecrations, and even forms of law, as the emergencies of his admired poem would permit.

[a] *Bellus homo, et magnus vir idem, Cotta, videri:*
Sed qui bellus homo eſt, Cotta, puſillus homo eſt.
A pretty rogue and ſtateſman wiſe,
You fain would have us deem ye;
At once t' attract the ladies eyes,
And make the men eſteem ye.
But, Cotta, e'er ſince men were made,
A very pretty fellow,
Who ſtrutts in toupee and brocade,
Is but a little fellow.
MARTIAL, Epig. book i. ver. 10.

SECT. V.

BY tracing the cauſes which have the greateſt influence upon language, we are led to a thought that muſt give pleaſure to the truly good. We find that without virtue there can be no true poetry: it depends upon the manners of a nation, which form their characters, and animate their language: if their manners are ſound and entire, their ſpeech will accompany and do them juſtice: and if we riſe higher, and ſuppoſe them not only ſound, but noble and heroic (as we muſt do, when ſpeaking of manners fit for poetry,) what is this but virtue's ſelf in all her luſtre and dignity? Your Lordſhip muſt have viewed her at times in this glorious dreſs, and will forgive me, if I am inquiſitive upon ſo amiable a ſubject. Is what we call heroiſm indeed any thing elſe, than a diſintereſted love of mankind and our country, unawed by dangers, and unwearried by toils? If it is not, the ſocial paſſions, and nobleſt affections muſt prevail in an epic poem. They may vary indeed, and ſhew themſelves very differently in different characters: they may likewiſe have their own ſhades, and muſt be ſometimes drawn upon dark grounds, to raiſe and give them a relief; but ſtill they muſt be the principal figures

in the piece, if it is meant to give a real and lasting pleasure.

But there is another conclusion offers itself, and appears so odd, that one does not know what to make of it: for does it not sound something like treason in Apollo's court, to say, that a polished language is not fit for a great poet? And yet, if the maxim be true, "That no man describes well "but what he has seen, nor talks with ease and "mastery, but in the language and idiom he has "been used to," I apprehend we must assent to it. Whoever is acquainted with what passes for politeness of stile, and with the subjects usually treated of in that manner, will easily forgive me, if I am at no pains to make out the consequence. I shall only observe, that what we call polishing, diminishes a language; it makes many words obsolete; it coops a man up in a corner, allows him but one set of courtly phrases, and deprives him of many significant terms, and strong beautiful expressions, which he must venture upon, like Virgil, at the hazard of appearing antiquated and homely.

A language thoroughly polished in the modern sense, will not descend to the simplicity of manners absolutely necessary in epic-poetry: and if we feign the manners, we must likewise endeavour to imitate the stile. I have already shewn how little success we can expect in the attempt; and it were easy to give proof in fact, that no learning or genius is suf-

ficient to ſecure us from a miſcarriage in this particular. But the taſk is unpleaſant: let us therefore chuſe an example where we may rather praiſe than blame.

The name of FENELON calls up the image of a man diſtinguiſhed by every amiable quality: like ſome powerful charm, it makes real virtue, princely ſcience, and ſweetneſs of manners, riſe to our imagination. His perfect knowlege of antiquity, and flowing fancy, ſeemed to qualify him to write the ſequel of the ſimple and inſtructive Odyſſey. And yet we know that his enchanting work has not eſcaped criticiſm[a]; and that only ſuch parts of it lie expoſed, as attempt a mixture of antient and modern manners; that is, when he would reconcile old heroiſm with politics, and make poetry preach reaſons of ſtate.

It may be thought ſuperfluous after this to obſerve, that an abſolute court muſt have a pernicious influence both on the variety and characters of a nation, and the extent of their dialect; we need but look around us to ſee many of the fineſt countries in Europe, groaning under baffled laws and an arbitrary ſway, and giving diſmal proofs of the truth of this remark. In ſuch governments not only matters of conſequence are over-ruled at pleaſure, but

[a] *Critique des Aventures de Telemaque.* A piece equally cruel and unjuſt; without other handle in fact, than what ariſes from the glow of an elevated fancy, and the incompatibility of manners.

in the moſt indifferent circumſtance of life, all muſt conform to the court-model. Example hath the force of command; you muſt both ſpeak and write after a copy; and no ſuſpicious words muſt reach the ears of the miſtaken great. By this means, many things come to loſe their names, or are ſoftned into inſignificant appellations; and where theſe cannot be had, circumlocutions are called in, to witneſs our dread of offending by ſpeaking plain truth *.

Beſides, it is odds, but that in ſuch a country, there are formal reſtraints upon writing: which muſt have yet a worſe effect. What a lamentable ſight are thoſe countries at this day, which were formerly the parents of learning and ingenuity? How barren now in real literature! How diſtorted the little they produce! bearing the marks of the violence and unnatural ſtate in which it is conceived and brought forth. Inſtead of thoſe manly ſentiments which do juſtice to virtue and vice; inſtead of thoſe bold pictures of men and things of

* When the cardinal Richelieu had obliged the French academy to cenſure the Cid, a piece of the celebrated Corneille's, the author wrote a letter to the cardinal's favourite M. de Boiſrobert; where he tells him, *J'attens avec beaucoup d'impatience les ſentimens de l'Academie*, etc. 'I wait with great impatience 'for the ſentiments of the academy, that I may know what I 'am to follow hereafter: till then, I muſt have a diffidence 'of every thing I write, and dare not employ a ſingle word 'without dread of its being condemned.'

P. PELISSON, Hiſt. of the French Acad.

the preſent age, (the age in which we are moſt concerned,) they muſt content themſelves with licking up ſcraps of monkiſh hiſtory, and collecting legends of the ſaints: or if they venture to reaſon, it muſt be upon diſtant facts and general principles, remote from their own times, without daring to hint a parallel, or make the ſmalleſt application.

Such is their ſtate; while we, with joy, may view our native iſle, the happy inſtance of the connexion between liberty and learning. We find our language maſculine and noble; of vaſt extent, and capable of greater variety of ſtile and character than any modern tongue. We ſee our arts improving, our ſciences advancing, life underſtood, and the whole animated with a ſpirit ſo generous and free, as gives the trueſt proof of the happineſs of our conſtitution.

Forgive me, my Lord, if a thought ſo pleaſant, and which you have ſo great a hand in making ſuch, has drawn me from a melancholy ſubject. One cannot, without compaſſion, think of a poor poet writing under the terror of the inquiſition. He knows not but ſuch a verſe may give umbrage to a right reverend father inquiſitor; another to a reverend father prior inſpector; this ſimile may ſtartle deputy reviſor, and that alluſion ſeem dangerous to the vicar himſelf.

No wonder if the frighted author, haunted with ſuch ſable ſpectres inſtead of muſes, is delivered of a

deformed production. Their ghostly appearance must damp every liberal thought. The mind dares not exert itself, but crutches under the panic of a censure, backed with the secular arm to inforce it. And can we expect any grace or spirit in a work that is conceived and fashioned in such piteous circumstances? No surely, nor in a little time any works at all: for the fathers generally obtain their end; and in a nation where they are once entrusted with the power to effect it, in a little time so order matters, that scarce any one writes but themselves[a]. But these things have been the subject of many a treatise: I only mention them, to point out the reason of the antipathy between them and the sublimer kinds of writing. To expatiate upon the baneful influences of tyranny, would be very unnecessary, when a man living under the best regulat-

[a] A book in Spain must pass through six courts, before it is published. 1. It is examined by the Examinador Synodal of the archbishopric, commissioned by the Vicario. 2. It goes to the recorder of the kingdom, where it is to be published, Chronista de Castilla, Arragon, Valencia, etc. 3. If approved by them, it is licensed by the Vicario himself, attested by a Notario. 4. The privilege must be had from his majesty; and a Secretary counter signs. 5. After it is printed, it goes to the Corrector General por su Magestad, who compares it with the licensed copy, lest any thing be inserted or altered. And, 6. The lords of the Council tax it at so much a sheet. In Portugal, a book has seven reviews to pass before publication. I have smiled at some of their title-pages, bearing, for greater security of the buyer, *Com todas as licenças necessarias.*

ed government is too much moulded to its manners, ever to excel in that original and unlimited draught of mankind, epic poetry.

In oppoſition to theſe opinions, it may be advanced by ſuch as are acquainted with the progreſs and periods of literature, "That the interval be-"tween the high liberty and enſlavement of a ſtate, "has been obſerved to ſhew the world ſome noble "productions." The fact is unqueſtionable; and to diſcover the cauſes of it, we need only conſider the ſteps by which a government falls from its rights, to be at the mercy of a ſingle perſon.

In general, this diſaſter is laid to the door of corruption; and very juſtly: ambition and luxury ſeldom fail, when they have attained their full growth, to throw a ſtate into convulſions, and make it ripe for a maſter. They diſpoſe men to give and take, upon certain conſiderations, which by degrees grow weighty enough to affect the public: but at the ſame time, there is no ſeaſon on earth when men are ſo thoroughly known. When the offers are tempting, and bribes run high [a], it is then that men diſcover what they are worth, or for what they

[a] *Biduo, per unum ſervum, et eum ex gladiatorio ludo*, etc. 'In two days time, imploying only one ſlave, and he a ruffian too from the bear-garden, he accompliſhed the whole affair. He ſent for the judges to his own houſe; he promiſed, he prayed, he gave vaſt preſents: and beſides, (good Gods! what are we come too!) ſome of the judges were to have nights of certain ladies, and to be introduced to ſome noble youths, as an addition to their bargain.' Cicero writ-

will fairly begin and fell themſelves. The man of real virtue appears with double luſtre after the refuſal; and he who has withſtood one temptation, when his foible is found out, and rightly applied to, gives way upon the ſecond, and fixes his price. Mankind in this reſpect are like certain Indian feathers; they do not ſhew to advantage in one light only; but the diſorder and dangers frequent at ſuch junctures, ſet all their paſſions a going, and turn them into every ſhape they are capable of: and theſe attitudes, when well obſerved, and juſtly copied, give us the excellent pieces above mentioned.

Beſides, the times of ſuch ſtruggles have a kind of liberty peculiar to themſelves: they raiſe a free and active ſpirit, which overſpreads the country: every man finds himſelf, on ſuch occaſions, his own maſter, and that he may be whatever he can make himſelf: he knows not how high he may riſe, and is unawed by laws, which are then of no force. He finds his own weight, tries his own ſtrength, and if there is any hidden worth, or curbed mettle in him, certainly ſhews and gives it vent. Accordingly we ſee, that the geniuſes produced at theſe times, give great proofs of reach and capacity, eſpecially

ing to Atticus the hiſtory of Clodius's acquital by the aſſiſtance of Craſſus. Book I. epiſt. 13.

Curio's bribe to change ſides, and betray his country, was Centies H-S. or 80,729 l. 3 s. 4 d. He wanted this and five times more to free him of incumbrances: for he had a debt of Sex-centies H-S. 484,375 l.

in politic managements and civil affairs, in the largeſt ſenſe[a]. The abſtract ſciences are the product of leiſure and quiet[b]; but thoſe that have reſpect to man, and take their aim from the human heart, are beſt learned in employment and agitation.

It was when Greece was ill-ſettled, when violence prevailed in many places, amidſt the ſhock and confuſion of the wandering tribes, that Homer produced his immortal poem. And it was when Italy was torn in pieces, when the little ſtates were leagued againſt each other; in a word, in the heat of the ſtruggle and bloodſhed of the Guelfe and Ghibelline parties, that Dante withdrew from his country, and made the ſtrongeſt draught of men and their paſſions, that ſtands in the records of modern poetry. The author of the Eneid lived in a time of diſorder and public ruin: he ſaw the miſtreſs of the world become twice a prey to lawleſs power; her conſtitution deſtroyed, and prices ſet upon the heads of her braveſt ſons for oppoſing a tyranny.

And ſtill, my Lord, it was when unhappy Bri-

[a] Thucydides, Ariſtotle, and Demoſthenes among the Greeks, and Cicero, Virgil, and Horace among the Roman, were witneſſes to civil wars, or attempts made upon the public liberty. Some of them ſurvived it, and ſome fell in its defence.

[b] Καὶ πρῶτον ἐυρέθησαν, etc. 'The ſciences were invented 'in thoſe nations, where men were moſt at leiſure: where-'fore the mathematical arts were firſt brought to a bearing in 'Egypt; for there the tribes of the prieſts were left almoſt 'idle.' ARIST. Larg. Metaph. book 1.

tain was plunged in all the calamities of civil rage, that our high-ſpirited poem took its birth. It is true the plan of Paradiſe Loſt has little to do with our preſent manners; it treats of a ſublimer theme, and refuſes the meaſure of human actions: yet it every where bears ſome analogy to the affairs of mankind; and the author, who had viewed the progreſs of our miſery, has embelliſhed it with all the proper images his travelling, learning, and experience could afford him.

But as few of the changes which letters have undergone, eſcape your Lordſhip's notice, it will probably be aſked; "Since a poliſhed language, and "the deference paid to an abſolute court, are in-"compatible with the nobler kinds of poetry, how "came the new comedy to excel the old, which "had all liberty of language and manners, while "the other grew up under the influence of luxu-"ry, and the awe of the Macedonian power?"

A learned and ſententious writer will not allow this to be true: "The old comedy, according to "him, was employed in the reformation of man-"ners, in recommending of virtue, and pointing "out the abuſes of the ſtate; whereas the new "was contented to trifle with punks and pandars; "the old chuff, the Davus, or knave of the family, "and his young maſter: the ſcene, he ſays, is "always at Athens, and all the pother is ſome lit-"tle ſtory, or knaviſh prank; propoſing only "ſome trifling mirth or ſilly paſtime!"

But admitting the ſuppoſition; — the different nature of the writing accounts for it. Nothing can be more oppoſite than the ſtile, the language, the manners of comedy to epic: the fitteſt for the one ſeem the moſt improper for the other; and the moſt uncomic character on earth is that of a great and generous man. It is indeed true, that in ſuch a thorough democracy as Athens, the limits of comedy and tragedy could not be well aſcertained, or kept aſunder. Tragedy being a repreſentation of the high characters in life, and comedy of the lower, they were in reality jumbled together in this ſtate[a], where the vileſt and meaneſt creature might ſpeak as ſcurrilouſly of the perſon and conduct of the firſt citizens, as his education and temper could prompt him. Here lay the ſtrength of the old comedy, which could not ſubſiſt but in ſuch a ſtate; and which no doubt muſt have the preference, if immoderate laughter, if liberty to talk at random, and banter the higheſt dignities, and beſt men of the nation, be advantageous to that kind of writing. But if that liberty was often abuſed, and if the drama is capable of a nobler turn,

[a] *Pinxit et Daemon* [ΔΗΜΟΝ] *Athenienſium*, etc. 'He painted the people of Athens, by a very ingenious repreſentation: for he wanted to repreſent them changeable, paſſionate, unjuſt, and inconſtant; and at the ſame time exorable, merciful, compaſſionate; haughty, humble; courageous, cowardly; and all theſe things at once.'

PLIN. de Parrhaſio. l. 35. §. 10.

and of giving a more refined pleaſure; if more truth can be brought into the manners, and men and their natures more generally repreſented[a], in that caſe it muſt give way to the new.

I muſt however own, that while the high democracy prevailed at Athens, and the commonalty were poſſeſſed of that uncontrouled power which Pericles put in their hands, and Cleon exerciſed, during that time, Ariſtophanes and his followers had originals to draw from; and in that reſpect their wit and writings, which appear to us theatrical and falſe, are natural and true. But that wild licentious government was no ſooner checked by fears from abroad, (which always produce regulations at home) than the Καλοὶ Κἀγαθοὶ, the men of capacity and worth, began to diſtinguiſh themſelves and appear eminent; a ſecretion was made; manners were formed, and characters obſerved and valued.

Here was the riſe of the new comedy; Ribaldry was baniſhed, and Menander wrote. That is, at a ſeaſon when liberty was not loſt, but the excreſcencies of it lopped off; when the humour of that witty people was not quaſhed, but regulated: ſo true it is, "That every kind of writing, but eſpeci-

[a] *I poeti comici*, etc. 'The comic poets, in order to inſtruct us in the ways of the world, repreſent upon the ſtage, 'marrying, feaſting, pimping, whoring, thieving, ſharping, 'lying; —— loves, hatreds, brawls, juſt ſuch as you men 'are employed in every day of your lives.'

SPERON. SPERONI. della Uſura.

" ally the poetic, depends upon the manners of " the age when it is produced." The beſt poets copy from nature, and give it us ſuch as they find it. When once they loſe ſight of this great original, they write falſe, be their natural talents ever ſo great. Let Torquato Taſſo witneſs the truth of this, and the rapid Arioſto; each endowed with a fertile genius, and a happy expreſſion; but who quitting life, betook themſelves to aerial beings and Utopian characters, and filled their works with charms and viſions, the modern ſupplements of the marvellous and ſublime.

SECT. VI.

WHEN I reflect upon this way of reaſoning, from the influence that public manners have upon writing, I make no doubt but the queſtion will recur;—Since it is abſolutely the conjuncture, and manners of the times, that produce poets, " How comes it to paſs, that we have but one Ho- " mer? Could a ſpace of two or three hundred " years, when Greece, and the coaſt of Aſia, was " in a proper temperament for ſuch formations, " bring forth but one?"

The anſwer is obvious; that though it be abſo-

lutely neceſſary, yet it is not the only condition: there are many required beſides; too many to be here enumerated: there is an univerſal and elevated genius; a quality ſo rare, that an excellent author of our nation ſeems to think, "That of all "the numbers of mankind, that live within the "compaſs of a thouſand years, for one man that is "capable of making a great poet, there may be a "thouſand born capable of making as great gene-"rals, or miniſters of ſtate, as the moſt renowned "in ſtory[a]." But though this were exaggerated, there are many ſubſequent circumſtances of life, many advantages of education, and opportunities of knowing mankind in general, and ſeeing particular ſubjects fit for poeſy, which can hardly meet in one and the ſame perſon.

To inſtance in one particular, from which we may judge of the import of the reſt: much travelling, and wide perſonal obſervation, has been the lot of the greateſt epic poets. In this way of life they had frequent opportunities to acquaint themſelves with the originals of their draughts and fictions, whoſe great excellency, whether material or moral, is their likeneſs to nature and truth. But this happens to few men, eſpecially of a poetical turn: they are commonly none of the healthieſt people, and too delicate to endure the hardſhips, or face the dangers that are inevitable in long voy-

[a] Sir William Temple, Miſcel. part ii, eſſay 4. Poetry.

ages. And yet, with all these chances, the period I have mentioned, when the manners, the religion and language of Greece were at their proper pitch for poetry; to that period, I say, the world stands indebted for Linus, and Orpheus, for Olympus, Musæus, and Amphion; men who are handed down to us as the masters of verse, by the greatest of their successors [a]. Their songs, it is true, are long since perished; but the wise and peaceful Hesiod, part of whose compositions hath reached us, and commands our admiration, owes his birth to the same period.

Nor can there be a greater proof of the power that manners and the public character have over poetry, than the surprising resemblance of the oldest writings. Two things cannot be liker one another, than the old oracles, the fragments of Orpheus so called, and the antient hymns, are to Hesiod's and Homer's verses. Not to say in general, that they have the same turn; but the same epithets of Gods and men, the same sentiments and allusions, the same cadence and structure; nay, sometimes the very same expressions and phrases are to be met with in them all. Numberless are the Συνεμπτώματα, or coincidencies observed by the critics; and in short, the collusion of the metaphor and imagery is so palpable, that many have attributed the effects

[a] *Musæum ante omnes.* — Æneid. vi. Horat. Ode 11. Lib. 3. et de Arte Poetica.

of their being formed upon the ſame models, their writing from the ſame originals, and in the ſame plain dialect, to downright copying or plagiariſm.

But there is no need to go ſo far: the cauſes aſſigned are ſufficient to produce all this likeneſs; if we remember too, that they commonly make writers exerciſe themſelves upon the ſame ſubjects, which is alſo a part of their influence. A certain kind of ſcience is peculiar to every age, and a particular way of treating it. They are both the effect of the conjuncture ſo often mentioned. And while I am upon this ſubject, I cannot paſs over one conſequence, which has been long a problem among the learned. It is elegantly propoſed by a Roman [a], who, if his honeſty had been equal to his underſtanding, might have ſtood in the firſt rank of their hiſtorians.

"Though I have little room for it, ſays he, yet "I cannot help mentioning a thing which I have "often revolved in my mind, and cannot ſatisfy my"ſelf about the cauſe of it: for, is it not exceeding "ſtrange, that the great maſters in every profeſſi"on and ſcience, always appear in the ſame period "of time, and are of the ſame caſt and model? — "One age, and that at no great diſtance of years, "produced Eſchylus, Sophocles, and Euripides, "men of a divine genius, who carried tragedy to

[a] C. Velleii Paterc. Hiſt. Rom. lib. i. in fine.

" its height. In another, the old comedy flouriſh-
" ed under Eupolis, Cratinus, and Ariſtophanes;
" and the new was both invented and brought to
" perfection by Menander and his cotemporaries,
" Diphilus and Philemon, without leaving hopes
" of imitation.

" In like manner, the philoſophical ſages of the
" Socratic ſchool, how ſhort a while did they con-
" tinue after Plato and Ariſtotle's death? As to
" Oratory, who can be ſaid to have excelled in it
" before Iſocrates, or after the ſecond deſcent of
" his ſcholars? They came all ſo cloſe together,
" that no one great man can be ſeen at a diſtance
" of time from another." Then the hiſtorian pro-ceeds to ſhew, that the ſame thing had happened among the Romans; and, with great reaſon, ex-tends his obſervation not only to the ſublimer ſci-ences, but alſo to grammarians, painters, ſtatuaries, ſculptors, founders, and to all the ſubſervient arts. The ſame event might be ſhewn to have fallen out in any nation, where learning ever flouriſhed, and whoſe hiſtory is known.

Wonderful, my Lord, have been the conjectures about this puzzling appearance; and many a curi-ous ſpeculation has been employed to ſolve it[a]: it

[a] See Diſcours phyſique ſur les influences des Aſtres; where the planetary powers are reduced to Des Cartes' principles, and accounted for by the Materia Subtilis. 12mo Paris, chez Coig-nard.

has been doubted, "Whether any influence of "ſtars[a], any power of planets, or kindly aſpect "of the heavenly bodies[b], might not at times "reach our globe, and impregnate ſome favourite "race with a celeſtial ſpirit." Supernatural conceptions, and miraculous nurſings[c], have been contrived as a ſalvo for our belief, when the hero or ſage atchieves things which we fancy above the

[a] *Les aſtres, & principalement les ſignes*, etc. 'The ſtars, 'and chiefly the ſigns and planets, are, under God, the ſecond 'cauſe of manners among men: the poet ſhews the power 'they have over the tempers of men, when, — *etc.* It is thus 'that Virgil caſts the horoſcope of the Roman empire at its 'nativity.' P. Bossu, of Epic Poetry, book 4.

[b] ——— ——— ——— *Diſtat enim, quae*
Sydera te excipiant, modo primos incipientem, etc.
O, there's ſtrange difference, what planets ſhed
Their influence on the new-born infant's head.
'Tis fate that flings the dice; and as ſhe flings
Of kings makes pedants, and of pedants kings.
What made Ventidius riſe? and Tullius great?
But their kind ſtars, and hidden power of fate?
Dryden's Juvenal.

[c] Hercules, Alexander, and Scipio *, were ſaid to be, in reality, Jupiter's ſons, though they paſſed for Amphitryonis, Philip's, and Pub. Scipio's. Demaratus belonged to the hero Aſtrobacus †: and Orpheus, Homer, and Plato, according to antient tradition, had only mothers of the human race. Pindar was fed with hony by the bees themſelves: Achilles was nurſed with the fat of lions, and marrow of deer: and the founders of Rome were ſuckled by a wolf, though the founder of the Perſian empire had only a bitch to perform that duty for him ‡.

* *Livii Hiſt. lib.* 26. † *Herodot. Erat.* ‡ *Juſtin. lib.* 1.

reach of men. But our court-hiſtorian underſtands better; and though he talks a little ſtrangely in the end[a], yet he ſeems to lay the ſtreſs of the matter upon a ſurer bottom. The way he accounts for it is by emulation, which certainly contributes to the perfection of every art and ſcience; and was ſtrong among the Ἀοιδοὶ, or *Bards*, whoſe appearing in a cluſter gave riſe to the queſtion[b]: but this principle is far from giving complete ſatisfaction, which indeed Velleius does not affirm.

I will not repeat what has been formerly ſaid; for I make no doubt of being prevented, and that your Lordſhip has already made the application. It is the different periods or ſteps, naturally ſucceeding in the progreſſion of manners, that can only account for the ſucceſſion of wit and literature.

I have marked out thoſe of Greece in the hiſtory of the language[c]; they correſpond with admirable

[a] *Naturaque quod ſummo ſtudio petitum eſt*, etc. 'That what 'we ſtudy with the greateſt deſire, naturally gains the ſummit; and it is difficult to arreſt perfection in any thing; 'and what cannot advance, naturally goes backward.'

VELLE. PATER. Hiſt. Rom. lib. 1.

[b] In Heſiod's days, who, if not contemporary, lived at no great diſtance of times from Homer, a poet, or Ἀοιδὸς, was as commom a calling as a porter or joiner, and as liable to emulation and envy.

Καὶ Κεραμεὺς Κεραμεῖ κοτέει, καὶ Τέκτονι Τέκτων;
Καὶ Πτωχὸς Πτωχῷ φθονέει, καὶ Ἀοιδὸς Ἀοιδῷ.

Potters and Joiners grudge at every brother,
And Bards and Beggars envy one another. HESIOD.

[c] See Page 51, — 54.

niceneſs to the ſucceſſive ſets of poets, orators, and philoſophers enumerated by the Roman hiſtorian. "For they are ſettled and uniform cauſes, and "never fail to work their effect, unleſs when ex-"ternal violence hinders their operation."

In the early ages of the Grecian ſtate, the wild and barbarous inhabitants wanted the aſſiſtance of the muſes to ſoften and tame them. They ſtood in need of being impreſſed with an awe of ſuperior and irreſiſtible powers, and a liking to ſocial life. They wanted a mythology to lead them by fear and dread (the only holds to be taken of a rude multitude) into a feeling of natural cauſes, and their influence upon our lives and actions. The wiſe and good among the antients ſaw this neceſſity, and ſupplied it: the oldeſt of the inſpired train were the

Pii Vates, et Phœbo digna locuti [a]:

They had religion for their theme, and the ſervice of mankind for the end of their ſong. How unlike in this to ſome late authors of our own growth! who, I hardly know for what end, have written againſt the religion of their country; and without pretending to ſubſtitute any thing better, or more practicable, in its place, would deprive us of our

[a] Virgil Æneid. vi. It was for this reaſon that Ariſtotle calls them, and the early philoſophers, πρῶτος θεολογήσαντας, the firſt who ſpoke of the nature of God. ARIST. Metaph. See the following Section.

happy eſtabliſhment, merely, as it would ſeem, for the pleaſure of pulling down, and doing miſchief.

But the firſt men of ſcience of Greece, better inſtructed in human nature, and knowing the advantages of national rites, wrote in a different ſtrain: the formation of things, the birth of the gods, their properties and exploits, firſt informed their numbers: next were celebrated the heroes, who had extirpated tyrants, deſtroyed monſters, and ſubdued robbers. They ſung the flood of Deucalion, and reparation of mankind; the wars of the Centaurs, and the fate of the giants.

Et ſaevos Lapithas, et nimium Mero
Hylaeum, domitoſque Herculea manu
Telluris juvenes; unde periculum
Fulgens contremuit domus
Saturni veteris. ——[a]

Theſe, my Lord, were their ſubjects: they are ſome of the Βροτων Θελκτηρια, as Penelope calls them[b]; ſome of the

Εργ' Ανδρων τε Θεων τε, τατε κλειουσι Αοιδοι.
Doings of Gods and men, which poets uſe
To celebrate. ——[c]

They are as old as our knowlege reaches in the Grecian antiquity, and the Αοιδοι or *Bards*, who

[a] Horat. Carm. lib. ii. od. 12.
[b] *Songs to ſoothe mankind.* Odyſſey 1.
[c] Ibid.

made and ſung them, are among the earlieſt characters.

This appears from the accounts given of them by Homer himſelf: particularly when he relates, how the greateſt prince of the confederate Greeks put his beautiful wife under the tuition of a bard; and takes care to let us know, that the lady was inacceſſible, until that faithful guardian was removed. Many of them lived contemporary with Homer: no prince's court ſeems to have been without one or more of them; and they reſorted to the great feaſts and high ſolemnities all over Greece, to aſſiſt at the ſacrifices, and entertain the people. We know ſome of their names, who tuned their lyres to the foregoing ſubjects; but their ſongs are loſt, and with them many a ſtrain of true poetry and imitation.

SECT. VII.

HITHERTO we have viewed Homer's public advantages, and have found that they afforded him the fitteſt manners for poetical compoſitions, and the nobleſt language to expreſs them. We have viewed theſe firſt in their own beauties, and then tried them both by the foils of their contraries, and ſtrength of their conſequences; and have found them to be genuine and true. His perſonal

good-fortune is now before us; I mean, "What "effect, his private education, his way of life, and "ſucceſs in it, muſt have upon him as a poet."

The tradition concerning his education is very lame. Plutarch having related his mother's adventures about the time of his birth, paſſes over the firſt part of his life in ſilence. But if the relation of it aſcribed to Herodotus be true, he was educated in the only way that learning was to be had at that time. Letters were but then little known, and it ſeems ſtrange, that in ſuch a place as Smyrna, where according to the cruel practice of theſe ages, the Lydians had been juſt expelled by another tribe, there ſhould be any perſon who underſtood or taught them.

But the low circumſtances of Homer's family carried him and his mother to Phemius's houſe, and left him his ſucceſſor in the ſchool. I take Phemius to have been one of the Ἀοιδοί, or *Bards*, who might, when at home, inſtruct youth in letters: for I ſuppoſe learning was not then common enough to make a profeſſion by itſelf. If there was any knowlege in the country, it muſt be in ſuch a man's hands[a]. And this is indeed the important part of

[a] Τὸν δὲ Φήμιον, etc. 'Antient hiſtory has handed down 'Phemius as the maſter of the poet; and repreſents him to 'have been a wiſe man, and ſtruck with the muſes. — Phe'mius was a philoſopher, which was likewiſe the character of 'every bard.' EUSTATH. on the Odyſſey.

He is ſaid to have written a poem, Νόστον τῶν ἀπὸ Τροίας, etc.

the queſtion, "What learning was then in being, "and what kind of knowlege it was poſſible, in "that age, to acquire?"

One of the moſt learned and laborious of the Roman writers, after great ſearches into antiquity, has left it doubtful when or where poetry was firſt produced: but adds, "It is certain there "were poems before the Trojan war [a]." As this was the form in which learning firſt appeared in Greece, it would have been highly entertaining to have known the opinion of that great ſcholar concerning theſe early productions; not only what they were; but whether the poems, ſtill extant in his days, were the genuine works of the authors whoſe names they bore? For it was the practice of the antient poets, and particularly the epic or rhapſodiſts, to conceal their names, which indeed the nature of their work did not invite them to mention. We have a convincing proof of this in the Κυπρια Επη, a poem of the wars of Cyprus, believed by people in after-times, to be the work of no leſs a man than Homer himſelf. It appears that this opinion was ſtill entertained in the days of Herodotus, who confutes it by comparing a paſſage in that poem, with another in the Iliad [b]. For want of

[a] 'The Return of the princes, who came home with Agamemnon from Troy.' PLUTARCH on Muſic.

[a] De poematum origine magna quaeſtio eſt: ante Trojanum bellum probantur fuiſſe. PLIN. Hiſt. Nat. l. vii. c. 56.

[b] Herodot. Euterpe, lib. ii.

ſuch a guide to point out the ſpecies of learning that prevailed in Homer's time, we muſt try to find out the riſe of the national opinions of his countrymen; becauſe in order to judge what kind of knowlege they, or any people were addicted to, the firſt ſtep muſt be, to ſearch for it at the fountain.

While the policies of Greece were yet but forming, Aſſyria, Phœnicia, and Egypt were mighty kingdoms, flouriſhing under regular governments, and happy under the richneſs of their ſoil, and their methods of improving it. In a courſe of years, the long peace they enjoyed, and the arts which ſuch times produce, having brought a great part of the adminiſtration into the hands of the ſacred order, they took all poſſible methods to keep up their authority, and aimed at nothing more than the raiſing their reputation for wiſdom and knowlege. This rendered them firſt envious of their diſcoveries, and then at pains to find out methods, "How "to tranſmit them to their deſcendants, without "imparting them to the vulgar." Here was the origin of allegory and parable: and the foundation of the received ſaying among the antients, Ἀλληγορεῖν εὕρημα τῶν Αἰγυπτίων: *To allegorize is an Egyptian invention.*

The ſenſe I would put upon this maxim is, ſince it is natural to all nations to employ alluſions, and ſpeak in ſimilitudes, the Egyptians have built upon it, ſettled the tropes and metaphors, and im-

proved it into an art. Nor did they ſtop here; but, as a ſecond wrapper, and a remedy againſt the growing knowlege of the country, they invented, or borrowed a new character for writing theſe allegories. They called it ιερα γραμματα, or *holy letters*, becauſe they muſt be known by none but the prieſts, nor uſed by them but in divine matters.

Your Lordſhip will remember, that Danaus [a] the Egyptian, Cadmus the Phœnician, of Egyptian extract, and the Phrygian Pelops, were the firſt planters or improvers of Greece. But beſides the deep impreſſion of the Aſiatic and Egyptian manners, which theſe founders of cities and kingdoms muſt give their new ſubjects [b], it is agreed on all hands, that the firſt ſages among the Greeks drew their ſcience from theſe countries, and their theology in particular from Egypt [c].

It is true, there was as yet no ſeparation of wiſdom: the philoſopher and the divine, the legiſlator and the poet, were all united in the ſame per-

[a] Ἁι Δαναυ θυγατέρες ἦσαν, etc. 'The daughters of Danaus firſt brought this myſtic rite (the Theſmophoria of Ceres) out of Egypt, and taught the wives of the Pelaſgi to practiſe it.' HERODOT. Euterpe.

[b] Ἄλλαι μὲν (Μυθοποιΐαι) ἐπὶ Μάγοις, etc. 'Some pieces of it [the origin of the antient theology] were compoſed by the Magi in Babylon and Aſſyria, others by the Phrygians, and many, as is well known, by the Egyptians.' PHORN. c. 17.

[c] Σχεδὸν ἢ ϗ πάρντα, etc. 'Almoſt all the names of the Gods came from Egypt into Greece.'

HERODOT. Euterpe.

ſon[a]. Such was Orpheus, and his ſcholar Muſæus; Onomacritus too, and Thales[b]; and in general, all the antient law-givers employed the muſes to diſpenſe their divine inſtructions, and recommend their miracles[c].

The great men who came after them, and were bred in this antient ſchool of religion and politics, finding the governments of Greece already ſettled, kept to philoſophy; as Democritus, Pythagoras, and the Mileſian Thales: theſe, beſides their travels into Egypt, wandered over the greateſt part of the eaſt. Democritus[*] and Thales falling in times of leſs diſguiſe, plainly publiſhed their opinions: but Orpheus, Muſæus, Onomacritus, and even Pythagoras himſelf, drank deep of the cloſe reſerved manner of their maſters. They taught in allegory, and affected a myſticiſm in their commoneſt actions.

Pythagoras, though he lived lateſt, ſeems to have principally aimed at eſtabliſhing a ſect, or rather a

[a] See afterwards towards the concluſion of this ſection.

[b] Θαλης, Μιλησιος ἀνηρ, ϗ νομοθετικος. STRABO, book x. Lycurgus, they ſay, in his travels found Thales in Crete, and ſent him to Lacedemon.

[c] Πρότερον μὲν ἐν ποιήμασι, etc. 'In the ſame manner the 'philoſophers, as well as the lawgivers, at firſt publiſhed 'their opinions and their ſayings in verſe, as we find in Or-'pheus and Heſiod.' PLUTARCH.

[*] Pythagoras et Democritus — ambo, peragratis Perſidis, Æthiopiae, Arabiae, Ægyptique magis. PLIN. l. 25. c. 2.

ſemblance of a commonwealth; which made him take particular ways to form his diſciples, and raiſe the admiration of men: and indeed with them all, ſilence and ſuperſtition made a neceſſary part of their inſtitutions. But happily for Greece, though they would wrap up their doctrines in fable, they had not an unknown character to write in; ſo that their precepts and opinions came to appear, when their verſes were publiſhed, and their manner known.

Linus is ſaid to have written, in the old Pelaſgic letters, the expedition of the firſt Bacchus; and to have left relations of other tranſactions of the fabulous ages [a]. He wrote of the generation of the world and riſe of things, the common foundation of the Egyptian, and thence of the Grecian theology. As he is reckoned the parent of their poetry, ſo in the Egyptian records, kept by their prieſts, he ſtands at the head of the worthies who came to that country in queſt of knowlege [b]. Laertius [c] has preſerved the firſt line of his poem of the creation,

Ἦν ποτὲ χρόνος ὅτε, ἐν ᾧ ἅμα πάντ' ἐπεφύκει.

It contains an idea of the antient Chaos, or that primigenial ſtate of nature, when the elements lay blended together, and confuſion and darkneſs exerciſed an uncontrouled dominion. The ſame au-

[a] Diodorus Sicul. Biblioth. lib. 3.
[b] Ibid.
[c] In Prooemio.

thor adds, that Anaxagoras was thought to have taken occaſion from thence to advance his celebrated poſition, "That originally all things lay jum-"bled together in one jarring and diſorderly maſs, "but that a Mind came and put them in order [a]."

Coeval with Linus was Anthes of Anthedon [b], a town in Bœotia. He wrote Hymns [c], celebrating the Gods; that is, the powers and productions of nature; whoſe ſtronger aſpects, and ſtriking ſenſations, ſeem to have been the origin of rapture and verſe. Feaſts and ſacrifices would help forward the tranſport, and are finely fitted to this ſituation of the human mind. Horace makes the beginning of the Roman ſatire to have been at the harveſt-home of the old Italians, when they ſacrificed to the earth, and poured out milk to the genius of the woods [d];

a Copied by Virgil.
Principio, coelum ac terras, camposque liquentes
Lucentemque globum lunae, Titaniaque aſtra
Spiritus intus alit: totamque infuſa per artus
Mens agitat molem. ———
Firſt, heaven and earth, and the wide wat'ry plain,
The moon's bright orb, and all the ſtarry train,
A Spirit inward feeds: ———
Infuſed throughout, this univerſal ſoul
Revolves the maſs, and animates the whole.
VIRG. Æneid. lib. vi.

b Pauſanias, Boeot. lib. ix.

c Plutarch. de Muſica. lib. ix.

d *Tellurem porco, Silvanum lacte piabant;*
Floribus et vino Genium, memorem brevis aevi.
A boar to mother earth they ſacrific'd;
The ſylvan God with milk they, plain, appeas'd;

and the very invention of heroic meaſure is aſcribed to a female, Phemonoe, the firſt prieſteſs of Apollo [a].

— Pampho [b], a native of Attica, and diſciple of Linus, firſt ſung the Graces, without defining their number, or giving their names. He bewailed his maſter's death in a Dirge called Οἰτολινος: he ſung the Rape of Proſerpine by the infernal God, and wrote hymns to Jupiter, Diana, and Ceres. Philoſtratus ſays, that Homer copied the hymn to Jupiter, and changed it much for the better [c].

— But Orpheus, that great name in poetry, has eclipſed the fame of all the reſt: he likewiſe is ſaid to have been one of Linus' ſcholars; though Plutarch expreſly affirms, that he imitated no man in

But flowers and wine, their better Genius claim'd,
Mindful of tranſient life. ——— ———

HOR. Epiſt. i. ad Auguſt. lib. ii.

[a] Ἑξαμετρῶν κατάρξαι, etc. 'A certain woman, Phemonoe, 'a propheteſs of Apollo, is ſaid to be the author of hexame-'ter or heroic verſe.' EUSTATH. Prooem. to Homer.

And Strabo, Πρώτην δὲ Φημονοην, etc. 'Phemonoe, they 'ſay, was the firſt Pythia, or prieſteſs of Delphi.' Lib. 9.

[b] Pauſanias Boeot.

[c] Pamphio had ſaid,

Ζεῦ κύδιστε, μέγιστε Θεῶν, ἐλημμένε κόπρῳ,
Μηλείῃ τε, καὶ ἱππείῃ, καὶ ἡμιονείῃ.

Great Jove, ſupreme of Gods, involv'd in dung
Of horſe, and ſheep, and mules! ——— ———

Inſtead of which, with more dignity, Homer has turned it,

— Ζεῦ κύδιστε, μέγιστε, κελαινεφὲς, αἰθέρι ναίων.

Great Jove, ſupreme of Gods, who high enthron'd,
Inhabits ether, and compels the clouds! ——

PHILOSTRATUS.

his poetry or muſic, but was himſelf an original [a]. It is however certain, that he made the ſame voyage as his ſuppoſed maſter had done, into Egypt; where he ſtaid long, and was let into the ſecrets of their philoſophy and religion.

At his return he did greater ſervices to his country; or rather to the people among whom he choſe to live, for he is thought to have been originally from Thrace. His actions are themſelves involved in allegory, and related in the ſame kind of fable as he was wont to employ about his Gods and heroes. Whether he left any thing of his own in writing, is to me a great doubt. I find no reaſon to conclude he did not. But the fame of his knowlege was ſo high, that we have from Suidas [b], the titles of ſixteen or ſeventeen poems written under his name, chiefly by the Pythagoreans, who embraced his doctrine; and, from others, we may reckon up twice the number. They are philoſophical, prophetical, and religious; and were believed to contain his real opinions and the native ſtrain of his verſe.

He begun his ſong with antient chaos, its tranſformations and changes, and continued it through the various ſteps of creation: the offſpring of Saturn, or Time, the Æther, Love, and Night; the

[a] Ὁ δὲ Ὀρφεύς, etc. 'Orpheus appears not to have imitated any man.' PLUTARCH on Muſic.

[b] In Orpheo.

birth and progeny of the Giants; and ended in the formation of man [a]. He directed theſe his myſtical leſſons to raiſe an awe of the Gods in the breaſts of his hearers, that he might reſtrain them from barbarity and bloodſhed, and charm them into humanity and ſocial manners [b]. Ariſtophanes, when he would give the ſum of his ſervices, ſays,

Ορφευς μεν γαρ τελετας δ' ημιν κατεδειξε, φονων τ' απεχεσθαι,
Orpheus our prayers preſcrib'd, and holy rites,
And abſtinence from murder ——— [c].

As his name for many ages was the firſt in Greece for ſanctity and wiſdom, his doctrines, if they were not by himſelf committed to writing, muſt be current by tradition. The prince of the philoſophers quotes two lines from his theogony without inſinu-

[a] He ſung, Αρχαιν μεν πρωτα Χαος αμιγαρτον ανανκην, etc.
The ineffable neceſſity at firſt
Of hoary Chaos; then all-teeming Time,
Who couch'd in genial furrows, numberleſs,
Brought forth his firſt born Ether; and with him,
Of double nature fram'd, reſplendent Love,
Illuſtrious from far; the father fam'd
Of everlaſting Night: him ſons of men,
Late coming into being, Phanes call'd,
Becauſe he firſt ſhone forth: then deep in gloom
The progeny of powerful Proſerpine.
Theſe firſt he ſung; and laſt, the baneful deeds
Of giant-monſters wild, who early drop'd
From heaven down their dire productive ſeed,
Whence ſprung the mortal race that far and near
Are ſpread inceſſant o'er earth's boundleſs face.
ORPH. Argon.

[b] Horat. ad Piſon. [c] BATPAX.

ating any ſuſpicion of their not being genuine [a]; as Ariſtotle, the grand critic, does both from him [b], and from his ſucceſſor [c]. Nay, ſo late as the reign of Auguſtus Cæſar, Diodorus the Sicilian mentions the poem of Orpheus as a piece then held in great admiration, both for the matter it contained, and the particular harmony of its compoſition [d]. And truly I cannot doubt, but that the writings which paſſed under his name, whether written by Muſæus or Onomacritus, contained his genuine Dogma's [e].

Muſæus was Orpheus' famed ſcholar, or perhaps his ſon. Virgil ſpeaks of him as the greateſt of poets. He ſeems to have meddled leſs in the governing or reforming manners than his maſter; deterred perhaps by the unhappy end of the theological hero. Yet he compoſed prophecies and hymns, and wrote ſacred inſtructions which he addreſſed to his ſon. He preſcribed purifications and atonements, ſung the wars

[a] Ὠκεανος πρῶτος καλλιρρόου ἤρξε γάμοιο,
Ὅς ῥα κασιγνήτην ὁμομήτορα Τηθὺν ἔκυρσεν.
Old Ocean firſt join'd in the flowing band;
And Tethys, ſprung from the ſame mother, lov'd.
PLATO.

[b] Ariſtot. Οἰκονομικῶν α.

[c] Φησὶ γὰρ ὁ Μουσαιος, etc. 'For, according to Muſæus, 'to ſing is the delight of men.' ARIST. Polit. book 9.

[d] Καὶ γὰρ Πόιημα συνέταξε, etc. 'He [Orpheus] compoſed 'that poem which is ſo much admired; and which is allowed 'to excel in vocal harmony. DIODOR. SIC. book 4.

[e] They were called the Ορφικα Επη, etc. 'In theſe pieces 'called the Orphic poems,' ſays Ariſtotle, book 1. of the Soul.

of the Titans, and left ſomething upon aſtronomy. But his great work, and what brought moſt honour in thoſe days, was a Theogony or hiſtory of the creation [a]. Pauſanias is of opinion, that an hymn to Ceres is the only genuine remain of this philoſophical poet [b]. He had a ſon and a daughter, Eumolpus and Helene, both touched from Helicon. The ſon wrote of the myeſtries of Ceres and rites of Bacchus, and the lady is reported to have ſung the Trojan war [c].

Contemporary with theſe was Syagrus, whoſe character is ſtill more confined to the province of a poet. Elian ſays [d], that he too ſung of the war at Troy, and was "the firſt who gave a looſe to his "muſe upon that noble ſubject." Diogenes Laertius calls him SAGARIS, and brings him down to Homer's own days; whoſe rival and enemy he ſays he was while alive, as Xenophanes proved after he dead [e].

[a] Diogenes Laertius in Prooem: where he gives a principle of Muſaeus's philoſophy.

'Εξ ἑνὸς τὰ πάντα γίνεσθαι, καὶ εἰς τ' αὐτὸν ἀναλύεσθαι.

'Of one are all things made, and into one are they all to be 'reſolved.'

[b] Atticis et Meſſeniacis.

[c] Hephaeſtio apud Photium, Codice cxc. Suidas in Eumolpo.

[d] Ὅτι Συαγρος τις ἐγένετο Ποιητὴς, etc. 'There was one 'Syagrus a poet, after Orpheus and Muſaeus, who is ſaid to 'have firſt ſung the Trojan war, having firſt laid hold on that 'mighty ſubject, and dared to tread in that unbeaten road.' ELIAN.

[e] In Prooemio, and in Xenophanes's life, γέγραφε δὲ, etc.

We can tell with more certainty, that Amythaon's son, the prophetic Melampus, brought the mysteries of Proserpine from Egypt into Greece. He taught the story of the Titans, and according to Diodorus, τὸ σύνολον, τὴν περὶ τὰ Παθη των Θεων ἱστορίαν, "The whole history of the transactions "and disasters of the Gods[a]." He is celebrated by Homer himself, who without all doubt was acquainted with his Mythology[b].

About the age of Linus came Olen from Lycia[c], and composed the first hymns that were sung in Delos at their solemnities, which were among the oldest in Greece[d]. Homer himself frequented these feasts, to celebrate the fair offspring of Latona, and

'He was cotemporary with Homer, and his rival while alive; 'as Xenophanes was his enemy after his death; who also 'wrote against Hesiod and Homer in elegies and iambics, 'sneering at the things they have said concerning the Gods.'

[a] Diodor. Biblioth. lib. i.

[b] Odyssey, Ῥαψωδ. λ.; and again, Ῥαψωδ. ο.

[c] Οὗτος δὲ ὁ Ολην, etc. 'This Olen coming from Lycia 'composed the oldest hymns that are sung at Delos.' HEROD. Melpom. book 4.

[d] Λύκιος δὲ Ὠλην, etc. 'Olen the Lycian, as the man who 'composed the most antient hymns in Greece.' PAUSAN.

Plutarch, upon the authority of Anticles and Istrus, two antient authors, says, that the statue of Delos had a bow in one hand, and with the other supported the three Graces, who held each an instrument of music; one a lyre, another a flute, and the third a syrinx, or pipe. As to the antiquity of it, they said, οὕτω δὲ πάλαιον, etc. 'This statue is so old, that 'the makers of it are said to be of that generation of men, 'who were contemporary with Hercules.' PLUT. on Music.

ſing to the Ionians that repaired to Delos in vaſt numbers upon theſe occaſions. He glories in being Ἡδίστῳ Ἀοιδῶν, the *ſweeteſt of the ſingers* that came there [a].

Thymœtes, Laomedon's grandſon, and Orpheus's cotemporary, is recorded as the greateſt of the early travellers. Beſides the countries then known, to wit Aſia and Egypt, which he viſited, he is ſaid to have paſſed through Afric to the Weſtern region: there he ſaw the iſland in which the antient inhabitants affirm that Bacchus was nurſed; and having learned from the Nyſæans, the exploits of the God, at his return he compoſed in the old dialect, and wrote in the old letters, the piece called *the Phrygian poems* [b].

It was indeed from the leſſer Aſia that the Greeks had their regular muſic. The fortifier of Thebes, the famous Amphion, is called the *inventer of muſic*, I ſuppoſe in Greece: he is allowed the honour of firſt framing a lyre [c], and certainly employed both his melody and perſuaſive ſtrains, to induce the wild inhabitants to wall their town, and live order-

[a] See the following ſection.

[b] Diodor. Biblioth. lib. 3.

[c] Plato, ſpeaking of the invention of arts, ſays, Τὰ μὲν Δαιδάλῳ, etc. 'Some of the arts diſcovered themſelves to 'Daedalus, ſome to Orpheus, ſome to Palamedes; the laws 'of harmony were found out by Marſyas and Olympus; and 'the lyre by Amphion.' PLATO's Laws, book 3.

ly: but with what propriety he is called the inventer of the Lydian meaſure, I hardly underſtand [a].

The Phrygian Marſyas [b] claims the invention of the double flute, and of the meaſure that bears the name of his country. He was in high eſteem with the ancients, and ſeems to be but too ſenſible of his vein and accompliſhments, as appears from the ſtory of his conteſt with Apollo. Some believe the foundation of that fable to have been the fatal end of the muſician, who went mad, and threw himſelf into the river that bears his name [c].

His ſcholar, Olympus, ſhares with him the glory of the invention of the Phrygian meaſure [d], and

[a] *Muſicam invenit Amphion*, etc. 'Muſic was invented by 'Amphion: the pipe and common flute by Pan, the ſon of 'Mercury: the German flute by Midas in Phrygia; the 'double flute by Marſyas in the ſame country. The Lydi-'an meaſure was the invention of Amphion; the Dorian of 'the Thracian Thamyras: the Phrygian of Marſyas. A 'lute was firſt framed by Amphion, others ſay by Orpheus, 'others by Linus: Terpander uſed it with ſeven ſtrings; 'Simonides an eighth; Timotheus a ninth. Thamyras firſt 'played on the lute without ſinging; Amphion firſt ſung to 'it, others ſay Linus: Terpander firſt compoſed ſongs to it. 'But Dardanus the Traezenian was the firſt man who ſung to 'a flute.' PLIN. Nat. Hiſt. book 7.

[b] Suidas in Marſyas.

[c] Xenophon. Anabaſ. book 1.

[d] Νόμοι δὲ Ὀλύμπου, etc. 'The meaſures of Olympus and 'Marſyas are the Phrygian and Lydian, and the funeral tunes 'are particularly the invention of Olympus.' POLLUX, Onomaſt.

pretends to be the firſt himſelf who ſung a Nænia, or funeral ſong. He is ſaid, on the death of Python, ἀυλῆσαι Επικήδειον Λυδιστί, "To have played "a funeral tune upon the flute in the Lydian "ſtrain [a]." His compoſitions are ſelected by Ariſtotle as the moſt rapturous, and the apteſt to inſpire paſſion and enthuſiaſm [b] into the minds of the hearers. And he hath the teſtimony of the knowing Plutarch, of having greatly advanced his art, by introducing ſome kinds of muſic till then unknown to the world, and of being the prince and inventer of the beautiful Grecian manner [c].

The muſes lover in more ſenſes than one [d], the Thracian Thamyras, firſt played upon a lyre without ſinging. This he did to ſhow the variety of his genius, for at the ſame time he compoſed

[a] Plutarch on Muſic. He ſays there were two of that name.

[b] Ὀλύμπου μιλῆ, etc. 'Olympus's airs are allowed by all to 'make men enthuſiaſtic.' ARIST. Politics, book 4. And a little afterwards, ſpeaking of the different harmonies and their effects, he ſays, Ἐνθουσιαστικὺς δ' ἡμᾶς, etc. 'The Phrygian 'meaſure raiſes us to enthuſiaſm;' ſo that Olympus has been the author.

[c] Φαίνεται δ' Ὀλυμπος, etc. 'Olympus appears greatly to 'have promoted muſic, by introducing ſome things that never had been invented, and were wholly unknown to thoſe 'before him; and particularly he appears to have been the 'author of the noble ſpecies of the genuine Grecian muſic.' PLUT. on Muſic.

[d] See the catalogue, Iliad. book 2. and the article of the Pylians under Neſtor, where Homer mentions Thamyris; as alſo Euſtathius's notes.

hymns [a], the pious exercise of the antient poets. He likewise sung the wars of the Titans [b], and wrote a poem of three thousand verses upon the great foundation of their religion and morals, the Κοσμογονια, or *generation of the world*, or the Θεογονια, which is an equivalent expression [c].

The Trœzenians [d] boast an epic poet, Orœbantius by name, who wrote before Homer, I cannot tell upon what subject: but Melesander, the Milesian, sung the battle of the Lapithæ and the Centaurs [e], which seem to have been an action of great fame in the early ages, and to have afforded much exercise to the young muses of Greece.

The wise Palæphatus [x] is said to be the son of Hermes, and not long after the celebrated Phemonoe. There have been some great men since of the name; but this admired antient sung the generation of Apollo and Diana, and the contest of Minerva and Neptune. He wrote a poem upon Latona's locks,

[a] Plato of Laws, book 8.

[b] Plutarch on Music.

[c] Suidas in Thamyre.

[d] Ὅτι ἦν Ὀροιβαντιου, etc. 'There was an heroic poem, extant before Homer, written by Oroebantius of Traezen, as the Traezenian records relate; and there is another, who is said to have lived before Homer, Dares of Phrygia, whose Phrygian-Iliad I know is preserved till now.' ELIAN.

[e] Μελισανδρος ὁ Μιλησιος, etc. 'Melisander, the Milesian, wrote the battle of the Lapithae and the Centaurs; an action of great fame in the early ages of Greece.' *Ibid.*

[x] Suidas in Palaephat.

(Λιτες Πλοκαμων,) and another of an uncommon nature, "The voice and ſpeech of Venus and "Love[a]." He likewiſe compoſed a Κοσμογονία, or hiſtory of the creation of the world, in five thouſand verſes.

Theſe are ſome of the men in whoſe hands the antient mythology and poetry grew together. When I review them, I think it happy that Heſiod's noble work has reached our times. We ſhould ſcarcely know elſe what to make of ſo many Θεογονια's, Κοσμοποιϊα's, and Κοσμογονια's, as we have enumerated: but from it we know, that the *birth of the Gods*, the *riſe of things*, and the *creation of the world*, are but reciprocal terms, and in the antient ſtile ſtand for juſt the ſame thing. They were the common theme of the firſt poets and lawgivers, the earlieſt philoſophers, who by their ſeveral improvements and additions enabled Heſiod and Homer, their ſucceſſors, to give their theology a body, and reduce it to a ſtandard, that flouriſhed while Greece was a free country, and laſted ſome time after their liberty was gone.

And now I would willingly ſpare your Lordſhip the trouble of hearing any more concerning the books that might be in Phemius's or his ſcholar's library, was there not a preſumption, "That theſe "writings I have named are later than our poet:" and of this opinion is that great hiſtorian, and anti-

[a] Φόνας ϗ λόγυς Ἀφροδιτῆς ϗ Ἔρωτος. SUIDAS in Palaeph.

quary of Greece, Herodotus the Halicarnaſſean. "As for the Gods, ſays he, whence each of them "was deſcended, or whether they were always in "being, or under what ſhape or form they were, "the Greeks knew nothing till very lately. He-"ſiod and Homer were, I believe, about four hun-"dred years older than myſelf, and no more: and "theſe are the men who made a theogony for the "Greeks; who gave the Gods their appellations, "defined their qualities, appointed their honours, "and deſcribed their forms. As for the poets who "are ſaid to have lived before theſe men, I am of "opinion they came after them[a]." So far the hiſtorian; who no doubt means Linus, Orpheus, and their ſcholars, by the poets he does not name.

What he ſays of Heſiod and Homer, muſt be true in one or other of theſe reſpects; that either they brought their entire ſyſtem immediately from Egypt, and publiſhed it in Greece, till then ignorant of religion and rites: or that, without other aſſiſtance than their own wits, they contrived it wholly themſelves. But they are both equally incredible.

Whoever knows any thing of the nature of that kind of writing, needs but one reflection, to be convinced that a Theogony is a piece of deep learning, and vaſt labour. "It is a ſyſtem of the uni-"verſe, digeſted and wrought into an allegory: "it is a compoſition, made up of infinite parts,

[a] Euterpe, book 2.

" each of which has been a diſcovery by itſelf, and " delivered as a myſtery to the initiated[a]:" the contriving and putting them together has been a work of ſome ages, and is a conjunct effort of politics and philoſophy.

Neither, on the other hand, were Heſiod and Homer the firſt who learned religion in Egypt, and brought it over ſea to Greece. A ſmall acquaintance with their writings will convince any man of taſte that they wrote from life; and deſcribe the exerciſe of a worſhip long ſince eſtabliſhed in their country. An hundred paſſages in both authors make it abundantly plain, that the Greeks knew the names and natures of their Gods, had ſacrifices and ceremonies; temples, prieſts, prayers, and ſongs, long before either Heſiod or Homer were born.

But it is to no purpoſe to uſe other arguments than this noble hiſtorian's own words. In the beginning of the ſame book, ſpeaking of the word OCEAN[b], he ſay, Ὅμηρον δέ, ἢ τίνα των Προτερον Γενομενων Ποιητῶν, δοκέω τὸ ὄνομα εὑρόντα, ἐς τὴν Ποίησιν ἐσενείκασθαι. " Homer, I believe, or ſome of the poets

ω [a] Γνῶσαι ἀθανάτων τε Θεῶν θνητῶν τ' ἀνθρώπων,
Συστασιν, ἥτε εκαστα διέρχεται, ἥτε κρατεῖται.
Of Gods immortal, and of mortal men,
Th' eternal combination thou ſhalt know,
By which each thing above, and each below,
Is held, and govern'd —— PYTHAGORAS.

[b] It ſeems to be a Punic or Phoenician word [OG,] which ſignifies a *boundary;* becauſe the ſea is the limit of the land. This perhaps is the reaſon why Homer calls the river Nile, the OCEAN, Ὠκεανῦ τε Ῥοάς. —— See ſection 9th.

" who lived before him, having invented the word, " inſerted it into their poetry." Or if we ſhould be ſo indulgent as to allow, that he ſpoke negligently in this place, and according to the vulgar opinion; how ſhall we reconcile it, when he tells us expreſly that Melampus, a man placed by Homer[a] himſelf three generations before the Trojan war, " firſt taught the Greeks the name and ſacrifices of " Bacchus[b]? That the rites about funerals, cal- " led Orphic and Bacchi, were really and origi- " nally Egyptian? And in general, that the " Egyptians were the firſt of mankind who uſed " ſolemnities, made proceſſions, and appointed ini- tiations; and that, ὧδε Τουτων Ἕλλυνες μεμαθήκασι[c], " *from them the Grecians learned to do the ſame?*"

For is it not an eaſy concluſion, that if funeral rites, ſacrifices, and the name of Bacchus be found in Homer; and the hiſtorian tells us, that Melampus and Orpheus firſt brought them from Egypt, and taught them the Greeks; Is it not eaſy, I ſay, to conclude, " That this great author, having his " fancy full of the antiquity of the Egyptian rites, " in oppoſition to the upſtart religion of Greece, " has fallen unawares into an inconſiſtency, when he " ſays, that Homer and Heſiod were the men who " made a theogony for the Greeks, and firſt in- " formed them of the names and natures of their " divinities?" It remains then, that theſe fathers

[a] Odyſſ. Ραψωδ. ο. [b] Euterpe, book 2. [c] Ibid.

of our poetry, had themſelves, if not patterns to work by, as ſeems to have been Heſiod's caſe [a], at leaſt plenty of materials to work upon; which could be no other than the doctrines, whether traditional or in writing, of the men I have juſt now mentioned [b].

And thus we find an anſwer to the queſtion, What learning was then in being; and what kind of knowlege it was poſſible in Homer's days to acquire? It was wholly fabulous and allegorical. "The powers of nature and human paſſions were "the ſubject; and they deſcribed their various "effects with ſome analogy and reſemblance to hu-"man actions. They began with the riſe of things,

[a] Ἀλλὰ τῷ μὲν Ἡσιόδῳ, etc. Phornutus is of opinion, 'that the 'plication given of it [ſpeaking of the nature of Saturn] by 'Heſiod might be ſtill more complete; he [Heſiod] having 'borrowed things from more ancient authors, and added the 'moſt fabulous part of the ſtory himſelf; by which means 'it has happened, that the greateſt part of our theology has 'been ſpoiled. PHORNUT. on antient Mytholog. c. 17.

[b] ——— *Fuit haec ſapientia quondam,*
Publica privatis ſecernere, ſacra profanis, etc.
——— The wiſdom firſt in vogue,
Was to mark out, diſtinct, the ſacred bounds
Of public things and private, holy and common;
And faſhion by degrees a common-weal:
To ſtop promiſcuous luſt, give marriage rules,
Found ample cities, and carve laws in cedar.
Thus fame and reputation firſt accrued
To bards inſpir'd, and brighten'd every ſong:
A race divinely wiſe. In order next
Homer appear'd, diſtinguiſh'd. ——— HOR. ad Piſon.

" their viciſſitudes and transformations, defined " their nature and influence; and in their meta- " phorical ſtile, gave to each a perſon, a ſpeech, " and method of operation, conformable to their " fancied qualities." This they called a hiſtory of the birth of the Gods; of the heaven, to wit, the earth, air, and ſea; of the ſun, moon, and diviſions of the ſtars; of the rivers, woods, rocks, fountains, and the other conſtituent parts of the univerſe[a]. They related their loves and hatreds; their marriages, diſaſters, ſeditions, and wars; or, in other terms, the ſtruggles of their oppoſite natures, and the concord ariſing from their equilibrium:

Quid velit, aut poſſit, rerum concordia diſcors.

Such was the ſcience of the early antients; nor is there any other kind of learning to be met with in Homer: I mean ſuch learning as we acquire by books and maſters; for what knowlege he picked up as a traveller, is of another kind, and falls in more properly to be conſidered in another place.

[a] *Sic deinde effatus, frondenti tempora ramo*
Implicat, et Geniumque loci, primamque Deorum, etc.
His temples with a leafy bough he bound,
And firſt the Genius of the place ador'd:
Then Mother-Earth, the firſt of Gods; and Nymphs
And Rivers yet unknown: then antient Night,
With all her ſhining train. In order next
T' Idean Jove and Cybele he pray'd:
And laſtly, lowly bending, he invok'd
His parents, one from heaven, and one from hell.
VIRG. Æneid vii.

SECT. VIII.

BUT here, begging your Lordſhip's pardon, I muſt be permitted to think of my own good fortune in addreſſing this enquiry as I have done. Whoever has a diffidence of his own opinions, naturally ſeeks for a wiſer man than himſelf, with whom to communicate them: and if he is conſcious of any ſingular humour, or inclination to judge with a few againſt the multitude; to laugh perhaps at what they highly eſteem, and eſteem what they think contemptible, he muſt then find either one of the ſame ſentiments with himſelf, or, if he ſhould be miſtaken, one of that candour and knowlege of mankind, as will make allowances, and bear with the infirmities of his weaker friend. In this caſe, my Lord, I find myſelf bound to give fair warning of the forbearance I ſhall want; ſince I am upon the matter about to aſſert, "That Homer's being born "poor, and living a wandering indigent bard, "was, in relation to his poetry, the greateſt hap-"pineſs that could befal him."

We have already ſeen ſome of his obligations to his poverty. It put him in the only road of life in which learning was then to be acquired; with the

peculiar advantage of living in the houſe with his maſter, in the double relation of a ſcholar and a ſon. Had he been the child of a rich father, or of one who could have barely ſupported him, or even taught him his own trade, he had never gone to Phemius, to be doubly inſtructed in philoſophy and poetry, which at that time, as has been already obſerved, were not ſeparate ſtudies. The ſame neceſſity made him glad to be his ſucceſſor, and teach his ſchool after his death; an exerciſe, if not too long continued, of the higheſt tendency to ſtrengthen the mind and correct the fancy. But the grand good-fortune that Homer's poverty procured him was this, "That it forced him to take "up, and continue in the profeſſion of an Ἀοιδὸς, "or *ſtroling bard.*"

To comprehend the full extent of this happineſs, we muſt remember, that this is a Grecian character, which took its riſe in that country, and was formed upon no borrowed model. The poetry and allegory of the Egyptians was, like every thing elſe that could influence their manners, bounded and preſcribed by law [a]. Diodorus tells us, that men were forbidden the practice of muſic, as tending to effeminate their minds: and indeed the attention both of this, and of the Perſian and Babyloniſh governments ſeems to have been more turned to their

[a] See the following ſection, near the cloſe.

hiſtory and records, or to aſtronomy and numbers, than the encouragement of the muſes.

But in Greece, where nature was obſtructed in none of her operations; and no rule or preſcription gave a check to rapture and enthuſiaſm, there ſoon aroſe a ſet of men, who diſtinguiſhed themſelves by harmony and verſe. The wonderful tales which they told, and the melody with which they accompanied them, made them the delight of theſe ſimple ages; and their knowlege of things both natural and divine, gave them a great aſcendant over the ſpirit and belief of their cotemporaries.

Though we had no remaining teſtimonies of the honours paid to this profeſſion by the antients, we might ſafely conclude from its nature and functions, that it would meet with univerſal approbation. A man who has it in his power to charm our ears, entertain our fancies, and inſtruct us in the hiſtory of our anceſtors; who informs his wondering audience of the ſecret compoſition, and hidden harmony of the univerſe, of the order of the ſeaſons, and obſervation of days, ſuch a man cannot miſs of eſteem and attention[a]: but if he adds a ſanction

[a] On the old altar of PAN, ſays Sannazaro, *Pendeano due grandi Tavole di Faggio*, etc. 'There hung two large tablatures of beech, full of ruſtic characters, which contained 'their antient laws, and inſtructions for the paſtoral life. In 'one you ſaw marked all the days of the year; the changes 'of the ſucceeding ſeaſons; and the inequalities of night and 'day: along with theſe were the prognoſtics of the weather;

to his doctrine and art; if he pretends, "That he "is under the direction of the Gods; that he de- "ſcribes their natures, announces their names, and "decrees; that he does this by their immediate "orders, and then leads the way himſelf in the "new devotion;" he muſt needs become the object of their admiration and reverence.

That this was their conduct, appears from no weaker authority than the ingenuous Pindar's, the prince of the lyrics: he lets us know, that the Homeridæ (a family in Chios, thought to be deſcended from our poet) followed the occupation of their founder, and were, for the moſt part, what he calls *Singers of flowing verſe:* it was, he ſays, their conſtant practice to uſher in their ſong with a prayer

' and what days of the moon are lucky, and what unlucky ' for the works of men: and what every perſon, in every ' hour, ought either to follow or ſhun, in order not to treſ- ' paſs againſt the will of the Gods, as far as it can be obſerv- ' ed and known. — In the other, you read what kind of ma- ' nagement was proper for the flocks; of what make you ' ought to chuſe your cow and bull; their years fit for breed- ' ing,' *etc.* And the antient prieſt of the God had perfect knowlege — ' of the heaven, the earth, and the ſea; the ' unwearied ſun, and the growing moon; and of all the ' ſtars with which the heaven is arrayed; and conſequently, ' could tell the ſeaſons of plowing, or reaping, of dreſſing the ' vines, and planting the olives; of grafting the trees, and ' enriching them with boughs not their own.'

SANNAZ. Arcadia.

to Jupiter[a]: a cuſtom of a very devout appearance, and which they obſerved ſo ſtrictly, as to hand it down in a religious kind of tradition, to the poets of after-times. Piety was indeed the chief part of a bard's profeſſion; and ſome of their worthies, ſuch as Eumolpus, Melampus, and Epimenides, are reported to have done as great feats in this capacity, as the lawgivers did in theirs.

In other reſpects, we find the teſtimony of the oldeſt poets uſed by the later writers as the great maſters of ſcience: they are quoted as the fountains of hiſtory, the judges of politics, and parents of philoſophy. We have a noble inſtance of this in Hecatæus the Mileſian, whoſe knowlege and capacity fairly diſtinguiſhed him in the grand aſſembly of the Ionians[b]. The queſtion in agitation was of no leſs importance, than "Whether they ſhould "continue in their obedience, or rebel againſt the "great king?" So they called the Perſian monarch. Hecatæus diſſuaded the war; and produced a thing till then rarely ſeen, a map of the Perſian dominions, and from it made a computation of their power: but, like a maſter of the argument, if, on the other hand, they were reſolved to try the for-

[a] Ὅθεν περ ὁ Ὁμηρίδαι, etc.
Whence Homer's tuneful race
Begin their divine ſong;
(Songſters they moſtly are of flowing verſe)
From mighty Jove, to whom theſe games belong;
So the champion of the field, *etc.* PINDAR.

[b] Herodotus.

tune of war, he gave them good advice, and pointed out the only method of carrying it on. They neglected both parts of his counſel, and were ruined in the iſſue.

It is true, Hecatæus lived ſome time after Homer: but we find the character the ſame in his writings both for ſanctity and ſcience. An Αοιδος or *Bard*, according to him, muſt know Πολλα Θελκτηρια, *many ſoothing tales;* their ſubject muſt be Εργα Ανδρων τε Θεων τε, *the deeds of Gods and of men;* and their occupation is

Θεοισι τε, καὶ Ανθρωποισι Αειδειν.
To mortals and immortals both to ſing.

That Homer himſelf was one of the number, is what I can find no reaſon to doubt. It was the concurring opinion, and conſtant tradition of all antiquity that he was ſo: and the place where he makes the moſt immediate mention of himſelf in his own writings, declares him to be an Αοιδος, and the foremoſt of the profeſſion. I touched upon the paſſage before, which is wonderfully wrought, and of vaſt ſimplicity. It is addreſſed to Latona, and her prophetic offſpring Apollo and Diana, whoſe feaſt was held at Delos, and was frequented by vaſt multitudes of people from Ionia, and the adjacent iſlands. "Hail, heavenly Powers, ſays the bard, "whoſe praiſes I ſing; let me alſo hope to be re- "membered in the ages to come: and when any "one born of the tribes of men, comes hither a

" weary traveller, and enquires [a], who is the ſweet-
" eſt of the ſinging men that reſort to your feaſts,
" and whom you moſt delight to hear? Then do
" you make anſwer for me; *It is the blind man*
" *that dwells in Chios;* —— *His ſongs excel all that*
" *can ever be ſung* [b]."

But I muſt deal fairly upon this point, and own, that this ſame hymn is ſaid by ſome to be none of Homer's; but the compoſition of one Cynæthus; a Chian too, and a great rapſodiſt, who has the honour to be the firſt man that ſung Homer's works in Sicily; and is ſaid to have been the author of a good many verſes, that paſs under the poet's name in the Iliad and Odyſſey. Theſe poems, they tell you, Homer did not commit to writing himſelf; but his poſterity in Chios, and the rhapſodiſts, who were for ever reciting them, came at laſt to have them by heart; and this Cynæthus, their chief, while he preſerved Homer's, and put them together, did intermix a good many of his own invention. The hymn to Apollo, in particular, is pointed out as one of his compoſitions; ſo that we could not draw much from it relating to Homer, if there was ſufficient authority to ſupport the aſſertion.

[a] ——Τίς δ' ὑμῖν ἀνὴρ ἥδιστος ἀοιδῶν
Ἐνδάδε πωλῆται; ᾧ τὶν τέρπεσθε μάλιστα;

[b] Τυφλὸς ἀνήρ· οἰκεῖ δὲ Χίῳ ἐνὶ παιπαλοέσσῃ·
Τοῦ πᾶσαι μετόπισθεν ἀριστεύουσι ἀοιδαί.
Ὁμηρ. Ὕμνος εἰς Ἀπόλλωνα.

[c] Thucydides, however, quotes it as Homer's.

But there is not: all we have for it, is the word of a nameleſs ſcholiaſt of Pindar's, who ſpeaks faintly of it himſelf; and the men of that claſs, though very uſeful in their way, we all know, have but ſmall pretenſions to great credit in facts: or if their teſtimony was of any weight, the ſame ſcholiaſt has preſerved three lines of Heſiod's, which ſeem to determine the queſtion [a]. They aſſert, that this, or ſome ſuch hymn was of Homer's compoſure, and that he was wont to make voyages to Delos on the ſame errand. There is, however, ſtill better ground to believe it his; I mean the authority of the learned and accurate Thucydides, who quotes this very hymn as an original compoſition of our poet's [b], and whoſe judgment is of more weight than a hundred annotators.

It was neceſſary to clear ſo important a point, becauſe this is the only piece of Homer's, which fixes the place, if not of his birth, at leaſt of his abode [c]: it ſhews in what he placed his merit, and how he wiſhed to be talked of among poſterity: it likewiſe favours the received opinion of his loſing his ſight in the decline of life, and leaves no doubt of his occupation.

[a] Ἐν Δήλῳ, τότε πρῶτος ἐγὼ καὶ Ὅμηρος ἀοιδοὶ, etc.
In Delos firſt, Homer and I, young bards,
In youthful hymns, alternate, tun'd our ſong;
To ſing Latona's ſon, awful and bright.

[b] Lib. i.

[c] Ariſtotle was of opinion, that Homer was a Chian.

The island Chios was no ill-chosen retreat: it enjoyed the diffusive benignity of the climate, in common with the rest of that delicious coast; but peculiar to itself, it produced the richest wine that Greece could boast[a]; and abounded in the other ingredient of the pleasures of the antients, the finest oil. What made this so necessary, was the use of the hot bath; an article in their living they rated so high, as to set it upon a footing with the joys of wine, and the charms of the fair: and the three together were thought so sweet by the antient men of pleasure, that life in their opinion was not worth keeping without them[b].

The inhabitants of Chios, Homer's companions, bore an excellent character among the other islanders, and particularly proved such excellent seamen, that while the power of Greece was but yet in its infancy, they were able to fit out a powerful fleet,

[a] Athenaeus Deipnosophist. lib. xii.
Quo Chium pretio cadum? — HOR. lib. iii. ode 19.
Οἶνον Ἄριστον φέρουσα τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν, (Χίος). STRABO, book 14.

[b] BALNEA, VINA, VENUS, CORRVMPVNT CORPORA NOSTRA:
SED VITAM FACIVNT, BALNEA, VINA, VENVS.

Baths, Women, Wine our health destroy,
And cut life's scanty line:
But what has life, or health of joy,
Without Baths, Women, Wine?

Homer himself, when he describes a man newly come out of the bath, and anointed with oil, generally adds, that he appeared taller and larger than before, and was grown Ἐείκελος Ἀθανατοῖσιν, *Something like the Immortals.*

and even formed deſigns upon the ſovereignty of the ſeas; and ſometime afterwards, when a ſuperior force attacked them, they ſhewed great ſpirit in the defence of their liberties[a]. Our poet therefore in his ſituation was ſettled as it were in the middle, between Ionia and Greece. He had the advantage of going to either when he pleaſed; and could be eaſily tranſported to Delos, which was juſt in his neighbourhood, to attend the feaſt of his favourite Divinity.

It is, I think, generally allowed, that Homer took his characters from nature, or real life; and if ſo, the picture of the Αοιδος is his own. He does indeed omit no opportunity to do honour to the profeſſion, nor even to mention it. He has painted every circumſtance of it, draws ſimiles from it, tells its effects upon the hearers, and of all the wooers who had been devouring Ulyſſes's eſtate in his abſence, he ſpares not one, ſave Phemius the bard, and a Κηρυξ, or *public ſervant*[b].

Few people have conceived a juſt opinion of this profeſſion, or entered into its dignity. The reaſon of which I take to be, that we have no modern character like it: for I ſhould be unwilling to admit the Iriſh or Highland Runers to a ſhare of the honour; though their buſineſs, which is to entertain a company with the recital of ſome adventure, reſembles a part of the other. The Trovadores or

[a] Strabo, lib. 14. [b] Odyſſ. Ραψωδ. χ.

Troubadours of Provence, the earlieſt of the moderns who diſcovered any vein for poetry, have a better claim [a]. They ſung their verſes to the harp, or other inſtrument they could uſe, and attained to a juſt cadence and return of verſe in their Stanza's; but had neither manners nor language for great attempts.

This ignorance of an antient character has made ſome ingenious men, and admirers of Homer, take pains to vindicate him from it, as a mean and contemptible calling; or at leaſt to diſſemble and ſlur it over. It was indeed no life of wealth or power, but of great eaſe and much honour. The Αοιδοι were welcome to kings and courts; were neceſſary at feaſts and ſacrifices; and were highly reverenced by the people. The Pheacian poet is deſcribed

——————— Εριηρον Αοιδον
Δημοδοκον, Λαοισι Τετιμημενον.

——————— *valde amabilem Vatem,*
Demodocum, populis honoratum.

It will eaſily be granted, that men pinched in their living, and forced to have their thoughts ever upon the ſtretch for ſubſiſtence, cannot have room

[a] See Sperone Speroni. The name remains ſtill in Spain, as *Todos o los mas Cavalleros*, etc. 'All the knights-errant of 'the laſt age, or by far the greateſt part of them, were great 'Trovadores, [inventers of ſongs and verſes] and great mu'ſicians.' DON QUXOTE, part i. book 3.

for rapturous views, and prophetic ſtrains[a]. The ſame reaſon excludes all men of buſineſs, who are thoroughly ſo, from the ſociety of the muſes[b]; not only becauſe our capacities are narrow, but becauſe our minds as well as bodies, when once inured to a habit, ſeldom or never quit their wonted track: or if at any time, by main force, we are beaten out of it, yet "a certain manner of thinking and reaſoning always recurs, bearing a reſemblance to "the education and courſe of buſineſs we have run "through."

I remember a ſaying of Plato's upon an occaſion of this nature. There was one Anniceris a gentleman of Cyrene in Afric, who had acquired a wonderful dexterity at driving a chariot. He was willing to give the philoſopher a proof of his art;

[a] *Sed Vatem egregium,* ——————
Hunc, qualem nequeo monſtrare et ſentio tantum, etc.

The man whoſe noble genius is allow'd,
Who with ſtretch'd pinions ſoars above the croud,
Who mighty thought can clothe with manly dreſs;
He whom I fancy,— but can ne'er expreſs;
Such, ſuch a wit, though rarely to be found,
Muſt be ſecure from want, if not abound.
Nice is his make: — no hardſhips can he bear,
Avoiding buſineſs, and abhorring care;
He muſt have groves, and lonely fountains chuſe,
And eaſy ſolitudes to bait his muſe;
Unvex'd with thoughts of want.— The human mind
Two cares admits not. ——

DRYDEN's JUVEN. Sat. vii.

[b] Or the ſmall genius which my youth could boaſt,
In proſe and buſineſs lies extinct and loſt. PRIOR.

and, in preſence of abundance of people, drove ſeveral times round the academy with ſo ſteady a rein, as to leave but one print of his chariot wheels. Plato ſaid, "It was impoſſible that a man who had "beſtowed ſuch infinite pains upon a trifle, ſhould "ever be good for any great matter." In ſhort, whoever confines his thinking to any one ſubject, who beſtows all his care and ſtudy upon one employment or calling, may excel in that; but cannot be qualified for a province that requires the freeſt and wideſt, as well as the moſt ſimple and diſintereſted views of nature.

Now, if we were to ſit down and contrive, what kind of life is the leaſt obnoxious to theſe inconveniences, we ſhall find none ſo free from care, buſineſs, or want, as that of a BARD. It is exactly the eaſy, independent ſtate, that is unawed by laws, and the regards that moleſt us in communities; that knows no duties or obligations but thoſe of hoſpitality and humanity; that ſubjects the mind to no tincture of diſcipline[a], but lays it open to all the natural ſenſations, with which the various parts of the univerſe affect a ſagacious, perceptive, mimicking creature.

As this condition is in itſelf of the utmoſt importance to a poet, the conſequences of it are almoſt equally happy: the Ἀοιδοὶ, or *Bards*, were under

[a] Plato calls a mind fit for poetry, Ψυχὴν Ἄβατον; a *Soil unbroken*. Phædrus.

neceſſity of frequent travelling, and every now and then exerciſing their vein upon the greateſt ſubjects. In this ſituation did Homer begin to wander over Greece, carrying with him thoſe qualities that procured him a welcome wherever he came [a]. I have already ſhewn what a noble ſcene for travelling the Grecian cities and young commonwealths then afforded. Homer ſtaid ſo long in each of them, as was neceſſary to ſee, but not to be moulded into their manners. The order of a town, and the forms brought into the common city-life, elude the paſſions [b], and abate their force by turning them upon little objects. But he neither led a town nor country-life; and in this reſpect was truly a citizen of the univerſe.

The great philoſopher I lately mentioned, has dropt an expreſſion in the third book of his laws, which characterizes very nicely both the life which Homer led, and the manners that are deſcribed in his poems. He introduces a Lacedemonian ſaying, that his countrymen, the Spartans, uſed to read

[a] The poet himſelf, when ſpeaking of the people we gladly admit into our houſes, enumerates Μάντιν (a *diviner*) ἢ Ἰητῆρα κακῶν (or a *phyſician*) ἢ Τέκτονα δούρων (a *houſe-carpenter*.)

Ἦ ῥ Δημιοεργὸν Ἀοιδὸν, ὅς κεν τέρπησι ἀείδων. Ὀδυσ. Ῥαψῳδ. ρ.

A divine Bard to charm us with his ſong.

[b] A great man, who had reaſon to know it, ſays that he never ſaw the populace in ſuch a fury, but the hour of dinner or ſupper would cool them. They do not like what they call *Se déſheurer*. Memoir. de Retz.

this poet's verſes, Καὶ περ Ιωνικον ὀ Λακωνικον ἑκάστοτε διέλθων βιὸν, though he every where painted the Ionic, and not the Lacedemonian way of living. The oppoſition is, between the ſtrictneſs of the Spartan rules, in their diet, hours, exerciſes, and diverſions; and the Ionian liberty in all theſe points. The ſevere diſcipline of Thebes and Lacedemon was indeed no friend to poetry: it made many a noble patriot and gallant ſoldier; but there was never a poet a native of Sparta [a]; and Pindar, the only one produced in Thebes, kept but little at home, and ſeems not much to have affected the character of his countrymen [b].

The next advantage of Homer's profeſſion, was the acceſs it gave him into the houſes and company of the greateſt men. The effects of it appear in every line of his works; not only in his characters of them, and accounts of their actions; but the more familiar part of life; their manner of converſing and method of entertaining, are accurately and minutely painted. He knows their rarities and plate, and can hold forth the neatneſs and elegance

[a] *Quae urbes* [*Thebae et Lacedaemon*] *talium ſtudiorum*, etc. 'The cities [of Thebes and Lacedaemon] two of the firſt 'ſtates in Greece, were ſoils quite barren of poetry and learn-'ing; excepting that Thebes had been made famous by Pin-'dar's ſingle voice: for, it is without foundation, that the 'Lacedaemonians claim Alcman as their town's-man'

VALLER. PATER. Hiſt. lib. ii. § ult.

[b] See his life and writings; Λιπαρᾶν ἀπὸ Θηβαν, Φέρων μελὸς ἔρχομαι. Πυθ. β.

of their Bijouterie. He has nicely inſpected the trinkets their ladies wore; their bracelets, buckles, and necklaces, whoſe prettineſſes he ſometimes talks of with great taſte and exactneſs. He has a delicious pair of three-ſtoned ear-rings.

——— ——— Ἔρματα δύω,
Τρίγληνὰ ἱμερόεντα· χάρις δ' ἀπελάμπετο πολλή.

And a curious gold necklace, ſet in amber, in the form of a ſun.

——— ——— πολυδαίδαλος Ὅρμος
Χρύσεος, ἠλέκτρῳσι ἐερσμένος, ἠέλιος ὡς.

He has them too of ſeveral ſizes; for Lucina was to receive at Latona's lying-in, from the goddeſſes that were goſſips,

——— ——— Μέγαν Ὅρμον
Χρυσείοισι λίνοισι ἐείργμενον, ἐννεάπηχυν.

——— ——— *A necklace huge,*
Strung upon golden threads, three yards in length.

In a word, there is ſcarce a circumſtance in œconomy but what he has ſomewhere deſcribed, or made it evident that he knew.

Nor could it be otherwiſe, if we conſider the daily life of the Ἀοιδοι. The manner was, when a bard came to a houſe, he was firſt welcomed by the maſter, and after he had been entertained according to the antient mode; that is, after he had bated,

eaten, and drunk ſome Μηλιηδεα Οινον, *heart-chearing wine*, he was called upon to entertain the family in his turn: he then tuned his lyre, and raiſed his voice, and ſung to the liſtening croud ſome adventure of the Gods, or ſome performance of men.

Many advantages accrue from hence to the poet: he is under a happy neceſſity of making no fanciful conceits, or profound verſes in an uncommon language: but if he would ſucceed, he muſt entertain his wondering audience in a ſimple, intelligible ſtile. He might indeed tell wonderful ſtories of ſtrange performances, and places ſtrange: but they muſt be plainly told, and with a conſtant eye to natural manners and human paſſions: he needed not keep ſtrictly to them; that would raiſe no admiration; but with an analogy or likeneſs, ſuch as the tenour and circumſtance of the tender or woful tale would bear. Here too was abundance of opportunities not only of judging what was amiſs, what was true or falſe in his ſong; but of helping it. While he was perſonating a hero; while his fancy was warming, and his words flowing; when he had fully entered into the meaſure, was ſtruck with the rhythmus, and ſeized with the ſound; like a torrent, he would fill up the hollows of the work; the boldeſt metaphors and glowing figures would come ruſhing upon him, and caſt a fire and

grace into the composition, which no criticism can ever supply [a].

As to the audience, I might shew the good-fortune of our poet in that particular, by reminding your Lordship of the monitor of the younger Gracchus [b], or the slave who directed and checked the most fluent orator of Augustus's court [c]; but Moliere's old woman comes nearest our purpose. It was by her ear and taste that celebrated comedian tried the success of his comic scenes, and as they affected her more or less, so he judged of their force and failures [c]. Thus the most approved writer among the moderns makes choice of a circumstance for his rule that Homer was obliged to regard in every performance.

The more we consider its influence upon poetry, the stronger and wider it appears: to this necessity of pleasing his audience, I would ascribe that just measure of probability and wonder which runs through the greatest part of his works. The people must be entertained: that is, they must be kept at a gaze, and at the same time must comprehend the dangers, and feel the passions of the description. The adventure must be such as they can understand; and the method in which it is brought about, must surprize their imagination, draw forth

[a] Πλάτωνος Ιων ἢ Ραψωδος.
[b] See Plutarch in his life.
[c] Excerpta e lib. iv. Controvers. Senecae: in prooem. Her name was la Foret.

their attention, and win their heart[a]. This at once accounts for the ſtories which Homer tells, improbable indeed in themſelves, and yet bear ſuch a reſemblance to nature and truth.

His care to pleaſe his audience appears from a maxim he has advanced concerning the ſubjects that are liſtened to with moſt pleaſure.

Τῷ γὸ Ἀοιδῷ μᾶλλον ἐπικλέωσι Ἄνθρωποι
Ἥτις ἀκουόντεσσι νεωτάτη ἀμφιπέλληται [b]

For his poems were made to be recited, or ſung to a company; and not read in private, or peruſed in a book, which few were then capable of doing: and I will venture to affirm, that whoever reads not Homer in this view loſes a great part of the delight he might receive from the poet.

His ſtile, properly ſo called, cannot be underſtood in any other light; nor can the ſtrain, and manner of his work be felt and reliſhed unleſs we put ourſelves in the place of his audience, and imagine it coming from the mouth of a rapſodiſt: nei-

[a] Καὶ τὸ μὲν ὅλον, etc. 'The whole ſtrain of his narration is marvellous; and the texture of accidents in his poem is wrought up in the paradoxical and fabulous manner. This is done to fill thoſe who read it with anxiety and wonder, and ſtrike thoſe who hear it with aſtoniſhment. It is only to gain this end that the poet ſometimes quits probability and truth; as when he equips his divine perſons with too many attributes, or gives them an action or ſentiment that out-ſhoots the allegory.' PLUTARCH's Life of Homer.

[b] Odyſſ. Ῥαψῳδ. Α.

ther, to ſay the truth, is there any thing but this ſituation, that will fully account for all his heroes telling miraculous tales as well as himſelf, and ſometimes in the heat of a battle. But when we remember his profeſſion, and his common audience, we ſee the neceſſity of ſtories, and of ſuch as he uſually tells. It was not the inhabitants of a great luxurious city he had to entertain with unnatural flights, and lewd fancies; but the martial race of a wide and free country, who willingly liſten to the proweſs of their anceſtors, and atchievements of their kings.

It would be tedious to inſiſt upon every particular in the life of a rapſodiſt; but there are two advantages more which deſerve our notice. The firſt is the habit which the poet muſt acquire by ſinging extemporary ſtrains. We have daily proofs of the power of practice in every art and employment. An inclination indulged turns to a habit, and that, when cultivated, riſes to an eaſe and maſtery in the profeſſion. It immediately affects our ſpeech and converſation; as we daily ſee in lawyers [a], ſeamen, and moſt ſets of men who converſe with eaſe and fluency in their own ſtile, though they are often puzzled when forced to affect another. To what height ſuch a genius as Homer's might riſe by conſtant culture, is hard to tell; Euſtathius ſays, "That "he breathed nothing but verſe; and was ſo poſ-

[a] See Pelliſſon. Hiſtoire de l'Acad. Françoiſe.

"ſeſſed with the heroic muſe, as to ſpeak in "numbers with more eaſe than others in proſe[a]."

The ſecond peculiarity which attends a ſtroling life is, great returns of mirth and humour. After ſuffering cold and fatigue, a flood of joy comes impetuous upon a man when he is refreſhed, and begins to grow warm[b]. His heart dilates, his ſpirits flow, and if there is any vein of humour or thought within him, it will certainly break looſe, and be ſet a running[c]. The poetic, and moſt kinds of ſtrolers, are commonly men of great health; of the quickeſt and trueſt feelings: they are obliged to no exhauſting labour, to ſtiffen their bodies and depreſs their minds. Their life is the likeſt to the plentiful ſtate of the golden age; without care or ambition, full of variety and change, and conſtantly giving or receiving the moſt natural and elegant pleaſures.

It is an ingenious but cruel ſtory which the poets have contrived, to expreſs the train of cares brought into life by Prometheus or Foreſight: the chains which faſten him to the rock, and the inſatiable vulture that rends his vitals every morning. The

[a] Ὅτι ἴσχυε Ἐπὶ Ὁμήρος, etc. EUST. Prooem.

[b] The poet has deſcribed it himſelf, we may ſuppoſe from experience,

——— Μετὰ γάρ τι καὶ ἄλγεσι τέρπεται ἀνὴρ,
Ὅσις δὴ μάλα πολλὰ πάθῃ, καὶ πόλλ' ἐπαλήθῃ. ODYS. θ.
——————— When miſeries are paſt,
Pleaſures abide the man, who many a ſtep
Through toils and dangers took. ———

[c] *Satur eſt cum clamat Horatius, Evoe!* JUV. Sat. vii.

wandering ſongſters were almoſt the only people who eſcaped the doom: with a free unanxious mind they paſſed their days;

——*Verſus amat, hoc ſtudet unum:*
Detrimenta, fugas ſervorum, incendia ridet.

Their very ſtroling from one little ſtate to another would enrich their fancies. Solitude is a friend to thought; as a perpetual circle of pleaſure and diverſions, is its greateſt enemy. When alone, we are obliged to furniſh out our own entertainment; we muſt recollect ourſelves, and look within, if there be any thing there that merits our attention. When in company the regard we owe to every perſon in it, diſſipates the mind, and hinders reflection. The way to think little, is to hurry from one amuſement to another, that we may fly from ourſelves. But the man who lives plain, and at times ſteps aſide from the din of life, enjoys a more genuine pleaſure: he obtains raviſhing views of ſilent nature, and undiſturbed contemplates her ſolitary ſcenes. He often turns his attention upon himſelf, canvaſſes his own paſſions, and aſcertains his ſentiments of humanity.

It is true, there are many hermits who are not much given to meditation, and ſome perſons whoſe buſineſs is to travel are remarkable for ſtupidity. But it is not the life of a recluſe that is here meant; nor the buſy journeys of ſuch as traverſe countries

for a livelihood. It is the ſhort retreat of a chearful mind, whoſe buſineſs it is to pleaſe; who muſt entertain the firſt company he meets in the moſt lively and affecting manner. This is quite a different ſituation: a ſituation that muſt oblige the poet, not only to ſtudy the paſſions of his hearers while he recited; to obſerve their features, watch every motion of their eye and turn of thought; but to look around him when alone, and lay up ſtore of ſuch images, as experience told him would have the ſtrongeſt effect.

Before I leave the ſubject, I would obſerve once for all, that the antients believed both Homer's poverty, and his ſubſiſting by his muſe. A man of great learning and eloquence, ſays[a], "That "many thought his life more wonderful than "his poetry: that to live poor and wandering, "and earn juſt ſo much by his poems as barely "to ſupport him, is a noble proof of his fortitude "and magnanimity[b]." This, my Lord, is ſpoken a little in the ſpirit of an antient Cynic or modern capuchin; where poverty is a merit, and a contempt of wealth, a title to deſerve it. But Dion is not ſingular as to the matter of fact. Plato is of the ſame opinion: he ſeems to have dealt a little hardly with Homer, becauſe his theology and the Ἰωνικὸν Βίον, the *free Ionian life* which he deſcribed,

[a] Dion Chryſoſtome.

[b] Τὸ γὰρ ἐν πενίᾳ διαγινέσθαι, etc. Διὼν Χρυσ. λογ. ιγ.

were not compatible with the manners of his high-modelled perfect city; but it is plain he has studied him with all the attachment and pleasure of a professed admirer.

In the tenth book of his Republic he gives several strokes of his life. He there makes it a question, "Whether Homer, who had imitated or re-"presented actions of all sorts, had ever done any "great thing himself?" He seems to think that "he had not; and draws his conjecture from the poet's friends: he mentions one Creophilus a Samian, as the chief of them; "Whose name, says he, "however ridiculous[a], will be less so than the "figure he himself makes in learning[b]: and if "what is told of the poet's life be true, his friends "seem to have been very careless about him. In "this respect Homer has not been able, like Prodi-"cus the Cean, or Protagoras of Abdera, to gain "admirers, or instruct his followers from a real skill "or knowlege of the things he describes; but has "only been good at mimicking and describing others. "For do you imagine, Glauco! (this is Socrates's "companion in the dialogue) that Homer's co-"temporaries would ever have permitted him and

[a] We would translate it *Lovemeat*, or Mr. *Fleshly*.

[b] He is said to have entertained Homer in his house upon condition he would give him some work, to be published under his [Creophilus'] name; and accordingly got a poem upon the taking and sacking of Oechalia. Καὶ ὑποδεξάμενον Ομήρον, λαβεῖν παρ' αὐτοῦ τὸ Ποίημα τὴν τῆς Οἰχαλίας ἅλωσιν. Suid. in Κρεώφιλ.

" Heſiod to wander up and down the country,
" ſinging and playing the rhapſodiſts, had they
" been able to improve their manners, or promote
" their affairs military or civil? Would they not
" have thought they had fallen upon a treaſure
" when ſuch men came to their town, done them
" all poſſible honours, and penſioned them to ſtay?
" Or if they could not fix them, would they not
" have followed theſe poets wherever they went,
" until they had fully learned the ſcience of ſo
" great maſters? Protagoras and Prodicus can
" demonſtrate, that no family nor city ever thrives
" without their inſtructions, and are ſo reverenced
" by their diſciples, that they would almoſt bear
" them upon their heads!"

This part then of Homer's life, I mean his exerciſing the profeſſion of an Ἀοιδός, may be conſidered at the ſame time as the chief part of his education. To it he owed many of the *ſpecioſa miracula*[a], which are admired by Horace. For as he travelled over the ſeveral provinces of Greece, he might pick up the country miracles: they commonly take their riſe either from the natural hiſtory of the place, or they are traditional ſtories of their mighty progenitors. They are always happy in ſome air of probability, and have ſome foundation in nature; ſomething in the mountain, cavern, or river which at firſt ſtruck the gazing mortals that approached

[a] Beautiful ſtriking miracles.

it, and made them conceive ſtrange notions concerning the cauſes of the apparent wonder. Theſe, paſſing from hand to hand, are enlarged, their circumſtances varied and refined, until they grow by degrees into an allegory or myſtic tale [a].

I make little doubt but this was one great fund of Homer's learning; as the neceſſity he lay under of a daily practice was his beſt inſtructor in the art of poetry. If your Lordſhip will be pleaſed to make the reflection, it will be found, that in all that wide plan of mankind, contained in his two poems, there is not any ſingle character marked out or diſtinguiſhed by acquired knowlege, as we underſtand the word. The knowlege and virtues of his perſons are all natural; ſuch as ſpring up without other culture than the native bent of their genius, and their converſe among mankind. Thus Ulyſſes grew up a ſagacious, ſubtle, bold, perſuaſive man, without the aid of maſters of rhetoric or lectures of politics: Agamemnon was lofty, royal, ambitious; a vigilant and brave general, dreading diſgrace, and careful of his people; and all this without ſtudying king-craft, or the art of war. It continued ſo until Homer's own days; there was but little erudition in the world: and what they had was allegorical; and deſcended, as appears from

[a] It is an obſervation of Strabo's concerning our poet, ἐκ μηδενὸς δ' ἀληθῶς, καίνην ἀνάπτειν τερατολογίαν, οὐχ' Ὁμηρικόν. Βιβ. α.

the former account, to the bards from the firſt lawgivers, who profeſſed both characters.

In this reſpect, the talent of their poets was truly natural, and had a much better title to inſpiration than their learned ſucceſſors; I mean learned by books; though I do not ſay that Homer or Heſiod had no learning of this ſort: but perhaps (*ut vineta egomet cædam mea*) the leſs of it the better. Certainly, my Lord, the ſcholaſtic turn, technical terms, imaginary relations, and wire-drawn ſciences, ſpoil the natural faculties, and marr the expreſſion. But the antients of early times, as nature gave powers and a genius, ſo they fought, or plowed, or merchandized, or ſung; wars, or loves, or morals, ὡς ἡ Μοῦσα ἐδίδου, *juſt as their muſe or genius gave permiſſion.*

Homer's blind bard [a] ſings by mere inſpiration, and celebrates things he had no acceſs to know but in that way: which, as it is the greateſt recommendation to the bard's trade, if, at the ſame time, it has a foundation, and is ſuch a lye as he uſes to make, (that is, like to truth) it muſt ſhew, "How "much theſe antient ſongſters truſted to their "vein; and were accordingly believed to know "ſomething more than men."

It is worth while to obſerve another picture of them given by the poet in the character of Phemius. He had been forced by Penelope's wooers to ſing at

[a] Demodocus the Pheacian.

their feasts; and was shut up with them in the great hall, where Ulysses had begun to take a dreadful revenge. When the slaughter was well over, he came out from the hollow of a door where he had lurked, threw down his lute, and springing to the hero besmeared with blood, fell down before him with these words:

Γουνοῦμαί σ' Ὀδυσεῦ. ——— [a]

Ulysses! at thy knees I beg for pity!
'Twill gaul thy soul hereafter, if thou killest
A bard, who sings both to the Gods and men:
Untaught by others, in my mind I bear,
By God himself implanted, all the strains
Of melody and verse. ———

Indeed, the epithets he bestows, and the insinuations he make concerning the characteristic of his brethren, would make one suspect that they were frequently under the power of impulse. A bard with him, is Θεῖος, *divine*; Θεσπὶς, *prophetic*: Ἐπιφήμιος, *most venerable*: he is the *darling of the muses* [b]; he sings from *the Gods* [c]; and if he touches upon an improper subject, it is not the Ἀοιδὸς,

[a] Ὀδυσσ. Χ. [b] Τὸν περὶ Μοῦσ' ἐτέλεσσε. Ὀδυσσ. Υ.
[c] Ὡς δ' ὅτ' Ἀοιδὸν ἄνηρ κατιδόμενος, etc. Ὀδυσσ. ρ.

——— I listen'd pleased,
Just as a man drinks up a poet's song,
Who from the Gods can sing, and whom they teach
Words ravishing to men: — amaz'd they stand,
They gaze, and listen hush'd, and dread the end.

or *Bard*, that is to be blamed, but Jupiter; who manages mortals just as he pleases [a]. In a word, he never begins to sing, until he feel the stirrings [b] of his mind, and hath the permission of his muse [c].

The other parent of our poetry, the peaceful Hesiod tells us, "That it is by inspiration of "the muses, and of the far-shooting Apollo, that "there are singing men upon the earth, and "players upon the harp [d]." Nor is it only the poetic tribe who make these pretensions, or the credulous multitude that believe them; but we find the men of greatest knowlege and severest thought, both admitting and supporting their claim.

It is a strange saying to come from the mouth of a wise philosopher, "That God, depriving the "poets of their understanding, uses them as his

[a] He sings, Ὅππη οἱ Νοος ὄρνυται, etc. Ὀδυσ. α.
——————— New strains of verse
He freely strikes, and follows bold his flame:
Nor is the bard to blame; 'tis Jove who prompts,
And gives to mortals, as he wills to each.

[b] —— Καλέσασθε δὲ Θειον Αοιδον, etc. Ὀδυσ. θ.
——————— But call the bard divine
Demodocus, whom God hath blest with song,
To chear mankind; in whatsoever strain
His genius takes the loose. ———

[c] Μυς' ἀρ' ἀοιδὸν Ανηκεν, etc. Ὀδυσ. θ.
Th' indulgent muse allow'd the bard to sing
The deeds of men. ———

[d] Ἐκ γὰρ Μυσαων, καὶ ἑκηβόλυ Απολλωνος
Ἄνδρες Αοιδοι ἐασιν ἐπὶ χθόνα, ϗ Κιθαρισται. Θιογ.

" ministers, sooth-sayers, and holy prophets, to " make us the hearers know, that it is not of them- " selves they say such wonderful and high things, " not being in their wits; but that it is God him- " self who speaks to us, and pronounces by " them [a]. For instance, he names Tynnichus the " Chalcidean, who never in his life made a poem " worth mentioning, except the celebrated Pæan, " or hymn to Apollo, which was in every body's " mouth, and was perhaps the finest poem that " ever appeared. This he says he composed, Ευρηματι Μουσαν, *by the invention of the muses.*"

These are high pretensions, and should be strongly supported before they are admitted: but if one uninfected with the poetical spirit was to search for their meaning in prose, it should seem to say, " That as there is no poetry without genius, so " that genius itself has its fits and seasons, which " are provoked and indulged no where so happily " as in the stroling anxious life of an Αοιδος, or " *Bard.*"

[a] Διὰ ταῦτα δὲ ὁ Θεος ἐξαιρούμενος τούτων νοῦν, etc.
Πλάτονος Ιων, ἢ περὶ Ιλιάδ.

To the same purpose Guarini,

Questa parte di Noi, che intende e vede, etc.
That part of us which sees and knows,
Is not our virtue, but it comes from heaven:
Heaven gives at pleasure, and heaven takes away.

SECT. IX.

HOW noble and natural ſoever the aſpects of mankind might be, which Homer had from the young commonwealths that were beginning to form themſelves all over Greece, yet his views were not confined to them. The manners of his poems are generally of the Grecian ſtamp; but he quits them at times, and by ſome artful touches inſerted here and there, he lets us know, that he is not ignorant of other nations, nor unacquainted with the ſtate of foreign countries. He appears, upon occaſion, a great genealogiſt, a knowing hiſtorian, and, which is moſt to our purpoſe, an admirable geographer. This no inſpiration will account for: we muſt therefore accompany him in the ſecond part of his travels, his viſiting Egypt and the eaſt.

Among the many ſtories contrived by his admirers, there is one told by Hephæſtion [a], which conceals a meaning very different from its firſt appearance. He ſays, "That a lady of Memphis, the "daughter of Nicarchus, by name PHANCY, ex- "celling in wiſdom, compoſed two poems; the "*War of Troy*, and the *Wanderings of Ulyſſes*; and "laid them up in the holy place of the temple of

" Vulcan at Memphis; that Homer coming there, " found means to get copies of them from the " ſacred ſcribe Phanites, out of which he compoſ- " ed his Ilias and Odyſſey." The ſenſe put upon this by the learned, is, that Homer was either an Egyptian born, (for ſo many have ſuſpected;) or, that his great genius having been cultivated by an Egyptian education, he was thereby enabled to compoſe his admired poems.

Beſides the conſtant belief among the ancients, of his having been in that country; and beſides the authority of the Egyptian prieſts themſelves, who affirmed it upon the faith of their records [b], there are other preſumptions in his works, which will probably have conſiderable weight with ſuch as can take them from the original.

I am obliged to ſay ſo; becauſe, though it be very pleaſant to trace the likeneſs between the cuſtoms of one country, and thoſe of another derived from them; to ſearch into the origin of the borrowed rites, and the natural foundation of the new mythology; yet their connexion is delicate, and the perception of it generally too fine, to be turned into a direct proof. It cannot be felt at all, without a nice knowlege of the mother-country and of its manners, as well as of their moral progeny. But ſuch a draught of the parallel cuſtoms of two

[a] Apud Photium, in Biblioth. §. 190.
[b] Diodorus Sicul. lib. i. Biblioth. in fine.

countries, would, I am afraid, prove tedious. It has afforded materials for ſome ingenious books, and is of late the ſubject of the moſt entertaining converſations. I will not therefore undertake to deſcribe the proceſſion at the funerals of Apis, or its progreſs through Heliopolis, up the Nile; upon which Orpheus and Homer founded their deſcription of the paſſage of ſouls to hell[a]: nor will I meddle with the lake near Memphis, which was the pattern of Acheron; nor the manner of burying in the delightful meadows round it, that gave riſe to the peopling the Elyſian fields.

Let me only obſerve, that theſe places were extant, and theſe cuſtoms ſtill kept up, ſo late as the time of Diodorus the Sicilian; and that the Egyptian prieſts affirmed to him, that from theſe places and cuſtoms Homer had taken his religious doctrines. They gave further inſtances, in the temple of darkneſs or gloom; the brazen gates of Cocytus and Lethe; the archetype of Charon's boat, and the etymology of his name[b]; with many other parts of the Grecian creed, (too many to mention here) which were realities in Egypt: there was a real

[a] Παρ' δ' ἴσαν Ὠκεανοῦ τε ῥοὰς, etc. Ὀδυσσ. Ω.

They paſs'd the candent Rock, by Ocean's ſtreams;
Then through the ſolar Gates, and land of Dreams
They travell'd quick; and reach'd the flowery mead,
Where ſouls inhabit, Fantoms of the Dead.

[b] CHARONI, in the old Egyptian, ſignified ſimply a *ferryman*.

temple, real gates, a wooden boat, and an honest ferry-man, all fairly existing in this world; though transferred by Orpheus and Homer, and applied, perhaps typically, to that which is to come[a].

But there is one proof given by the sacred order, of Homer's having been in their country, by much too curious to be omitted. It is taken from that part of his writings, where he relates, how the beauteous Helen, when she entertained Telemachus in her house, had put into the wine a drug of such virtue, as to inspire mirth and joy, and occasion a perfect oblivion of past ills, and an insensibility of present misery. This, says the poet, she received as a present from Polydamna the wife of Thon the Egyptian[b]: and this, say the priests, with all its circumstances, (the surprising qualities of the drug, and names of the persons,) he could learn no where so exactly as in Egypt.

To give this argument fair play, we must remember, that in those rude ages of the world, whoever discovered any knowlege of the customs or inhabitants of a distant country, was of course supposed to have been in that country. There was no correspondence of letters, little trade, and the writing of history was a thing unknown. Knowlege therefore implied travelling; and if that knowlege extended to persons, and the peculiarities of their manners, it fixed the travelling to the country

[a] Diodorus Siculus, lib. i. [b] Odyss. Δ.

where thoſe perſons lived: the character of the man who underſtood the tempers, and knew the mind of many people, was he, Ὃς μάλα πολλὰ — πλάγχθη [a], *who far had ſtray'd — o'er many lands.*

I muſt own, my Lord, this looks plauſible: but there are ſome other conſiderations which give it ſtill a greater air of veracity. From the moſt authentic accounts we have of Helen's adventures [b], it appears, that ſhe was for ſome time in the power of this Thon, (whether a prince of the country, or the governour of a province) when ſhe and Paris were driven upon the Egyptian coaſt, in their voyage from Greece to Troy; and conſequently that ſhe muſt have been in company with his lady: for we can never ſuppoſe, that ſo beautiful a creature, ſo diſcreet, and of ſuch high birth, ſhould be treated as an ordinary priſoner [c].

It appears alſo, that the Egyptian ladies were much addicted to the uſe of this medicine; and if we believe a later hiſtorian, they were the firſt people in the world who found out an antidote againſt grief and ſorrow [*]. The Egyptian complexion, which was thoughtful and melancholy, made them

[a] Ὀδυσ. Δ. [b] Ἡροδοτ. Ἐυτέρπη. βιβλ. β.

[c] *Her che non puo di bella Donna il pianto?* etc.

A charming woman ne'er can weep in vain; —
When from her tongue dear ſoft deluſions trill,
Her balmy lips ſend forth a golden chain,
That leads us willing captives to her will.

TASSO.

[*] Diodorus Siculus. Biblioth. lib. i.

fonder of an enlivening potion, than an airy people would have been; and the ſame excellent writer, Diodorus, when he was himſelf in the country, found the recipe ſtill known, and as much in vogue as ever.

Though I could take this upon the Sicilian's word; yet, I confeſs, what makes it, and the whole ſtory, appear the more probable to me, is, that I find the ſame medicine ſtill in uſe in the ſame country, and the effects of it now, exactly ſuch as Homer aſcribes to his heroine's Anodyne:

Νηπενθὲς, ἀχολόν τε, Κακῶν τ' ἐπιλησμοσύνην ἁπάντων.

Pow'rful to baniſh grief, to calm our ire,
And ſweet oblivion bring of every ill.

It is not much above a century and a half, ſince a young phyſician, who proved afterwards very eminent in his profeſſion, went down to Egypt with the Venetian conſul, whoſe uſual reſidence was then at Gran-Cairo. He ſtaid there ſome years, and after his return to Italy, publiſhed the obſervations he had made, in a treatiſe *De Medicina Egyptiorum*. He has a chapter in it, of the medicines which that people ſwallow for pleaſure; to elevate their fancies, and make them imagine themſelves in groves and gardens, and other places of delight. The firſt mentioned is the Aſſion, (our common Opium) *Quo devorato*, ſays the phyſician, *ferunt, homines hilares admodum evadere, multaque*

ac varia loqui, fortioresque ad quæcunque obeunda munera sibi videri: præterea, subdormientes hortos etiam et viridaria multa, arboribus, herbis, ac floribus variis perbelle ornata spectare[a].

The first of these are the very virtues of Homer's opiate: and to shew that he knew the place where it grew, as well as the persons who used it, Diodorus, after he has told that Thon and Polydamna were Thebans, immediately subjoins, that the ladies of Diospolis (the antient Thebes) had the honour of the invention: and the physician, as if he had travelled with him, adds to his former account, *Hunc succum, quo omnes utuntur, ex locis Saiethi, ubi olim Thebarum erat urbs præclarissima deferunt.* It is true, they use opiates for pleasure all over the Levant; but by the best accounts of them, they had them originally from Egypt[b]; and this one appears plainly to be a production of that country; and a custom, which your Lordship sees can be

[a] 'Among the Egyptian medicines is the opium. When they 'have swallowed it, the Egyptians say, that men become ex- 'ceeding merry, and begin to talk of many strange things: 'they think themselves much bolder than usual, and fitter 'for undertaking any darling enterprize. Afterwards, when 'they turn drowzy, they fancy themselves in gardens and 'arbours adorned with all sorts of plants, trees, and flowers, 'in the most beautiful manner.'

[b] All over the east, they call the finest sort of their opium *Misti*, and *Meseri*, which is to say, Egyptian: for Egypt is called Misti, as far as the Indies. It is a corruption of *Meseri*, which is plainly from *Mizraim*, the old name of Egypt. See Jac. Bontius de Medicina Indorum, lib. iii. cap. 4.

traced from Homer to Auguſtus's reign, (under whom Diodorus lived) and from thence to the age preceding our own.

It is indeed natural to ſuppoſe even now, when we hear any one talking of another country, deſcribing the places and perſons, and telling an exact ſtory of any occurrence in it, with a number of minute circumſtances; it is natural, I ſay, to ſuppoſe, that the man who talks in this manner muſt have been in that country. The account of Polydamna's preſent is very particular; and yet ſhe is not the only Egyptian acquaintance of the Grecian beauty recorded by Homer. She had another, "Alcandra, the wife of Polybus, who dwelt likewiſe in the Egyptian Thebes, the richeſt city then in the world. Her huſband, Polybus, made a preſent to Menelaus of two ſilver-baths; two tripods, and ten talents of gold: and the lady made a ſeparate preſent to Helen of a golden ſpindle, and a work-baſket of ſilver, of an oval form, gilt round the edges [a]."

The happy concurrence of circumſtances in this obſervation has tempted me to put them together: but any perſon who reads Homer with a tolerable taſte of antient manners, will find other marks of his having been in Egypt no leſs convincing.

No traveller, who does not deſcribe a country of deſign, has given more hints of its nature and ſitu-

[a] —— ἀργύρειον Τάλαντον —— τὸν δὲ ἴδυιαι, etc. Ὀδυσ. Δ.

ation[a]. He ſeldom mentions ſailing, but he names Egypt as the place of the greateſt reſort. When Ulyſſes appears to the wooers in the figure of a poor old man, the moſt probabe lye he can tell of the way he was reduced to poverty, is, that, as was the cuſtom of the antient Greeks, he had gone a privateering into Egypt; where he was taken, and ſold for a ſlave[b]. He had told the ſame tale more particularly to his ſervant Eumeus before, and even ſpecified the preciſe time it takes to ſail, with a favourable gale, from Crete to the only Egyptian port; (πεμπταῖοι ἰκόμεσθα) *in five days*.

When Antinous, one of the wooers, is diſpleaſed with Ulyſſes's behaviour, the firſt threat that offers to him, is, "to ſend him as a ſlave to Egypt, "or Cyprus[c]." And in his hymn to Bacchus, the poet repeats the ſame two places as the common market for ſlaves. He takes occaſion to give a nice deſcription of the pirates method of ſcouring the coaſt, from the ſtory of their having once ſeized upon Bacchus, as ſome noble youth, for whom they expected an immenſe ranſom: after they had dragged the God aboard, he makes the captain of the crew ſay to the ſteerſman, (who was beginning

[a] See Strabo, book i.

[b] Ὅς (Ζεὺς) μ' ἅμα λαοῖσι, etc. Ὀδυσ. Ρ.
Who, with a wandering crew of lawleſs rovers,
Dove me to Egypt, a long dreary road,

[c] Be gone, ſays he, Μὴ τάχα πικρὴν Αἴγυπτον, etc. Ὀδυσ. Ρ.
Leſt Cyprus ſoon you ſee or bitter Egypt.

to ſuſpect that their captive would prove troubleſome, and was adviſing to let him go)

Mind you the wind, and hoiſt aloft the ſail;
Haul in your tackle: we'll ſee to the priſ'ner;
He'll viſit, as I judge, Egypt or Cyprus,
Or ſail the northern ſeas: — Unleſs he tell
His name and quality, and friend's eſtate [a].

As to the country itſelf, the poet has made his hero, Achilles, (inſtructed perhaps by his father, or by the wiſe Chiron [b]) give a noble deſcription of the metropolis, Thebes; and in the compaſs of a few lines, has ſhewn its form, its wealth, and policy [c]. Nor is he leſs acquainted with the nature of the Egyptian ſoil, and the various productions of that land of wonders [d]. He could ſcarcely hear of

[a] Copied by Ovid, in his Metamorph. lib. 3.

[b] *Pelluſium, oppidum nobile, quod Peleus*, etc. 'Peluſium in Egypt, a famous town, which Peleus, Achilles's father, is 'ſaid to have firſt founded.' AMMIAN. MAR. lib. 22.

[c] Iliad. I. [d] Odyſſ. Δ.

Αἰγυπτίη, τῇ πλεῖστα φέρει ζείδωρος ἄρουρα, etc.
Egypt, where mother-earth, all-bounteous, yields
Innumerable drugs of various uſe:
Some highly precious for their healthful juice,
And many peſtilential, fraught with death.

Some of thoſe I take to have been, the Μύρον λευκὸν Αἰγύπτιον ἰνδικὸς, ſo often mentioned by Hippocrates; the Σύσινον μύρον, in the ſame author: it was an extract of lilies uſed by the ladies, and retains the Egyptian or Aſiatic name, from Suſan, a lily. Hippocrates likewiſe mentions the Ἀκανθα Αἰγυπτία, the Κόλλιον Αἰγυπτίου, the Βάλανος Αἰγυπτίος, the Αἰγυπτία συντρῖα, and even the Αἰγυπτίος Οἶνος itſelf. This

the Ethiopians in any other place but Egypt; much leſs could he learn their ſituation, and the diviſion of their tribes [a]; and leſs ſtill, that they were among the antienteſt of nations, and the oldeſt and pureſt votaries of the Gods [b].

Theſe, my Lord, are ſome of the preſumptions of Homer's having been in Egypt, which are to be met with in his works. They amount not perhaps to a ſtrict proof; but if ſurveyed, as they ſtand in the author, they carry a high probability, and will poſſibly leave but little room for doubting, when we conſider, that he ſailed with Mentes, a merchant and ſhip-maſter; and that no conſiderable trade was carried on in thoſe days, but with Egypt, Phenicia, or Cyprus: they furniſhed the chief commodities then known; Greece at that time labouring under a great Ἀχρηματία [c], as Thucydides calls it, and having no ſuperfluities to barter; but fetching the little wealth they had, and the beginnings of their arts, from theſe fountains of ſcience and government [x].

laſt is thrown out by a various reading, or rather a conjecture; the more improbable, that in another place, he preſcribes the Οπος Μηκωνος, and then Μηκωνιον Υπνωτικον.

[a] Iliad. I. [b] Ibid.

[c] Want of goods or merchandize.

[x] The Greek hiſtorians have been all condemned by Bochart, a man of very great learning, for aſſerting, that the lower Egypt was a plain made out by the continual congeſtion of the ſlime, which their wonderful river ſwept along, in its courſe through Ethiopia and the high country. He has like-

Now, if to so many marks of Homer's being a traveller, we join the character given of him in two words by a man of the same cast, in what he calls τὸ Φιλεῖδημον, καὶ τὸ Φιλεκδημον τοῦ Ποιητοῦ [a], *his love of knowlege and of travelling*, we both increase the probability of his having been in Egypt, and find a spectator worthy of so august a scene: here he might see, "What the utmost stretch of human "policy is able to perform?" he might see riches, pleasures, and magnificence, reconciled (as far as the nature of things will allow) with safety and

wise chastised Homer, who favours that opinion in his account of the distance of the Pharos from the land. He founds his own opinion upon the small alteration which the river has made upon the Egyptian coast, for two thousand years and upwards: for it is so long since Alexandria was built, and still continues a sea-port town: and he seas no reason, why it should not be making constant additions to the land, if it had ever made any. But there is a reason why that effect of the river should cease. Where-ever the wide communication of the sea, and the agitation that is frequent on the main ocean, is broken by the intervention of promontories, their slime and mud, and all the dregs of a mighty river, fall to the ground, and settle; being neither driven by the stream, now dissipated, nor tossed by the waves: and the slime thus settled, will receive additions, as long as it it protected by such powerful bulwarks, and no longer. The same river, if it find any rocks at a small distance from its mouth, will heap earth upon them, form an island, and continue to increase it, until it leave only space sufficient for a free egress to itself and the natural play of the waves on either hand, as they are directed by the adjacent shore. The mouths of the Ganges, the Euphrates, the Danube; and near home, the Maeander and the Po, are all proofs of what is asserted above.

[a] Strabo, Geograph. lib. i.

good order. Here was the nobleſt contraſt, and moſt inſtructive oppoſition, that any can offer to our view: he came from a country where nature governed; and went to another, where, from the higheſt atchievement to the ſmalleſt action in life, every thing was directed by ſettled rules, and a digeſted policy [a].

Here was a people ſo thoroughly moulded to their government, that education ſeemed to have taken place of nature; and, by a depth of thought in the legiſlature, was laid ſo true, and made to take ſuch hold of the paſſions, that it ſeemed rather to create than direct them. This appeared long after Homer's days, in their tenaciouſneſs of their own cuſtoms, under a frequent change of maſters [b], and their infecting all the nations that learned their religion or politics from them, with the ſame ſtubbornneſs and bigotry.

[a] Οὐ γὰρ μόνον τῶ χρηματίζειν, etc. 'For not only were 'the hours of buſineſs appointed in Egypt, or of hearing cauſ'es, and giving judgment; but the hour for walking, for 'going into the bath, for careſſing one's wife; and in a word 'for every thing that is done in life.' DIOD. SIC. book 1. Their very muſic and ſculpture was circumſcribed by law, and continued invariable, ſays Plato, for many thouſands of years. Legum, lib. 2.

[b] *Ægyptii plerique ſubfuſculi ſunt et atrati*, etc. 'The Egyptians, for the greateſt part, are duſky and mooriſh in their 'complexion, and inclined to melancholy; exceedingly litigious, and vehement reclaimers: — No force of tortures has 'been yet invented, which could compel an Egyptian to tell 'his own name, if he had a mind to conceal it.'

AMM. MARCEL. lib. 22.

But when our poet went down to Egypt, they had received no ſhocks from the Perſian or Macedonian power: they were living in peace and ſplendour; flouriſhing in all the arts they choſe to encourage; reverenced for their wiſdom, and renowned in arms. Here he might fill a capacious mind, and ſatiate that thirſt of knowlege, which is the characteriſtic of the greateſt ſouls. In Greece he muſt have learned many allegories, while he exerciſed his profeſſion; but here he would ſee their deſign: he would be inſtructed in the riſe and uſe of the doctrines he had imbibed: he would gain an eaſe and exactneſs in applying them, and be able to raiſe his moral to that ſtupendous height we ſo juſtly admire. For, what might we not expect from the affluence and fire of his imagery, when ranged and governed by a mind now maſter of the ſubject?

I am very ſenſible, that Homer's mythology is but little underſtood; or, to expreſs it better, is little felt: and for this reaſon, the effects of his Egyptian education are loſt upon the greater part of his readers. There are but few who conſider his divine perſons in any other light, than as ſo many groundleſs fictions, which he made at pleaſure, and might employ indifferently; giving to Neptune, for inſtance, the work done by Apollo, and introducing Venus to perform what he now aſcribes to Minerva. But it is more want of perception. His Gods are all natural feelings of the ſeveral powers

of the universe: or, as the bishop of Thessalonica calls them, "Εννοιων ευγενων σκιαι η παραπετασματα, "*Shadowings, or wrappers of noble sentiments.*" They are not a bundle of extravagant stories; but the most delicate, and, at the same time, the most majestic method of expressing the effects of those natural powers, which have the greatest influence upon our bodies and minds [a].

There is scarcely a page in Homer's poems, where we meet not with proofs of this assertion; and if we consider the stroke it must have in poetry, we shall find, that here is an advantage for description lost beyond retrieving: when to these natural sensations, the belief of sanctity was joined, and the apprehensions of a divine presence was filling the mind, the image would be irresistible, and raise such affections, as best account for this poet's being deified by the antients [b], and doated on by the moderns.

[a] Πᾶς δ' ὁ περὶ τῶν Θεῶν, etc. 'For all theology and enquiries concerning the Gods lead to a discussion of all opinions and of fables; because the antients thus wrapt up their conceptions of natural causes, and were sure to give a veil of fable to whatever they delivered.' STRABO, book 1.

And the excellent Vincenzo Gravina; *Perloche gli antichi poeti con un medesimo colore*, etc. 'Wherefore the antient poets (like painters) with one and the same covering (fable,) expressed their conceptions of things natural, theological, and moral; with which sciences, comprehended in a body, and set forth in popular dress, they struck out a way to treat of great and profound mysteries.' VINC. GRAV. on Poet. lib. i. §. 8.

[b] Ει Θεος εστιν Ομηρος, εν Αθανατοισι Σεβεσθω,
Ει δ' αυ μη Θεος εστι, Νομιζεσθω Θεος ειναι.

It may look odd to say, that even the ignorance of those ages contributed not a little to the excellency of his poems: but it was certainly so. The Gods were not called in doubt in those days; philosophers, and the speculative incredulous people had not sprung up, and decried miracles and supernatural stories; they rather made it their business to invent and propagate them, for the good of society, and the keeping mankind in order:

Expedit esse Deos, et, ut expedit, esse putemus:
Dentur in antiquos Thura Merumque focus [a].

By this means, here too, the poet described from realities; I mean, such things as had a double weight, by being firmly believed, and generally received for sacred truths: and he must have had a good faith, or at least a strong feeling of them himself, to be able to tell them with such spirit and complacency.

One of the wildest stories in the whole Iliad, if taken literally, is in the very beginning of the fif-

If antient Homer be a God indeed,
Then let him worship have, as is his due;
Or if he's not a God, his merits plead,
That he should pass for such, at least with you.
EPIGRAM. book iv.

[a] 'Tis fit there should be Gods — so let there be:
Let prayers be said,
And vows be paid,
The antient rites shall never fail for me.
OVID. de Arte Amandi, lib. i.

teenth book; where Jupiter reminds his ſpouſe, how, upon occaſion of a former quarrel, "He had "faſtened two anvils to her feet, and twiſted a "golden permanent chain about her arms; and ſo "mounting her aloft, had hung her up between "the clouds and the ſky." And yet this legend was ſo well believed, "That in the neighbourhood "of Troy they ſhewed the two lumps of iron "which had been hung about the goddeſs, and "which Jupiter informs us he let fall there, in "order to give future ages a certain proof of that "memorable tranſaction [a]."

Would not this tempt one to conclude, that the commonalty in all ages is the ſame? always ready to ſwallow a wondrous tale, be it ever ſo groſs or ſenſeleſs, and to believe a metaphor in its literal meaning. Our modern ſages are indeed widely different from the antient: they, as I obſerved, employed their wit in compoſing ſacred allegories, and their authority [b] among the people in ſupporting

[a] —— Μύδρυς δ' ἐνὶ Τροίῃ, etc.
Into the fields of Troy the anvils down
I threw; — that generations yet to come
Might aſk, and know the truth. ——

Καὶ δείκνυνται, etc. 'And accordingly they ſay, that two 'ſuch maſſes of iron, which a little above the poet called '*anvils*, are ſhewed by the people near Troy.' EUSTATH.

[b] Plato having firſt mentioned what he calls his Το ον ἀιεὶ, γένεσιν δ' οὐκ ἔχον· and Ο Γεγονως τε, ϗ ων, ϗ Εσομενος μόνος, with great modeſty adds, Περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων δαιμόνων εἰπεῖν, etc. 'But now, to diſcourſe concerning the inferior Gods (*i. e.*

them. They looked upon them as the great bridle of the multitude, to whose paſſions they knew it was neceſſary to ſpeak, without pretending to govern them by reaſon and philoſophy. But many of the moderns, who would fain be thought wiſe, employ their talents and learning, ſuch as they are, to very different purpoſes.

But what uſe ſoever may be made of it, it is certain that fiction and lying are inſeparable from poetry. This was the firſt profeſſion of the muſes; as they told Heſiod one day they appeared to him, while he fed his lambs in a vale of Helicon: "Shepherd, ſaid they,

Ἴδμεν ψεύδεα πολλὰ λέγειν ἐτύμοισιν ὁμοῖα·
Ἴδμεν, ἢυτ ἐθέλωμεν, ἀληθέα μυθήσασθαι.

'Tis ours falſe tales to frame, reſembling true;
And ours, t' unfold the truth itſelf to men.

"Then they gave him a fair rod, a ſhoot of verdant laurel, breathed into him a divine ſong,

all under the univerſal Mind) and explain their generation, is a ſubject too great for our capacity: in all theſe things, we muſt give credit to thoſe perſons mentioned before, who affirm that they are themſelves deſcended from the Gods, and who ſome way or other, perhaps, may have plainly come to the knowlege of their progenitors. We cannot therefore refuſe our belief to theſe children of the immortals, even though what they have ſaid ſhould want the neceſſary demonſtrations, or even be void of probability. But in obedience to the law, we muſt give credit to thoſe who profeſs to relate the concerns of their own family.' TIMÆUS.

" and taught him to celebrate things paſt, and
" things to come."

Another antient, of a lofty ſtrain and unbounded flight, has made a ſort of apology for this part of his profeſſion: he has founded it upon the nature of mankind, of which he ſeems to have had the ſtrongeſt and moſt forcible perceptions of any poet. It is in the ſtory of Pelops; — " the love
" that Neptune bore him after he was taken out of
" the kettle, where he had been boiled, and all
" the pieces of his body put together, without
" loſing a bit, ſave the top of one ſhoulder,
" which they made up with another of ivory."
Then moſt naturally he adds [a]; " Wonders are
" every where: and ſtill,— ſome way,— an artful
" tale,— dreſſed up with various lies, beguiles the
" thoughts of mortal men, and pleaſes more than
" truth."

The eloquent Attic moraliſt is of the ſame opinion: " Thoſe, ſays the orator [b], who would
" write or paint any thing agreeable to the vulgar,
" ſhould not chuſe the moſt profitable, but the
" moſt fabulous ſubjects. For this reaſon, Ho-
" mer, in his epic, and the inventers of tragedy,
" deſerve our admiration. They obſerved this ori-
" ginal biaſs in mankind, and have adapted their
" poetry to it. Homer has wrapt up the wars and

[a] Ἡ δαῦμα τὰ πολλά, etc. Πινδάρ. Ὀλυμπ. I.
[b] Ἰσοκρατ. πρὸς Νικοκλέα.

" conflicts of the heroes in fable; and the tragedi-
" ans, in the public games, entertain us with the
" ſame fables, by geſture and action."

It was indeed a very extraordinary project of our ingenious countryman, to write an epic poem, without mixing allegory, or allowing the ſmalleſt fiction throughout the compoſure. It was like lopping off a man's limb, and then putting him upon running races; though it muſt be owned, that the performance [a] ſhews with what ability he could have acquitted himſelf, had he been ſound and entire.

But we have at preſent ſo little fiction, and ſo much poetry, that it will not be amiſs to hear, among the reſt, Socrates's ſenſe of the matter. He had been often commanded in his ſleep, to apply himſelf to muſic: at firſt, he underſtood the admonition as if it related to philoſophy; that being, in his opinion, the trueſt harmony, which conſiſted in the numbers and meaſures of life. But at laſt, being in priſon, he bethought himſelf, that it was ſafeſt for him to apply to the common poetry. Wherefore he firſt ſet about compoſing an hymn to Apollo, whoſe feaſt was then celebrating: but upon a little farther reflection, " That a poet, if
" he would be really ſuch, muſt make, and feign,
" and not juſt write diſcourſes in metre [b];" and having no talent at allegory himſelf, he took the

[a] Sir W. Davenant's Gondibert.

[b] Ἐννοήσας ὅτι ἡ Ποιητὴν, etc. Πλάτωνος Φαίδων,

firſt fable he remembered of Eſop's, and put it in verſe.

There is not a circumſtance of this little ſtory, which affords not a maxim to a poet. But it ſeems ſtrange, that a man ſo capable and quick-ſighted in characters, and ſo great a maſter of irony as Socrates, ſhould have no genius for muſic[a], and be barren in mythology. I believe he reaſoned too much; was apt to canvaſs his fancies, and not be indulgent enough to his imagination, which is the prime faculty of a mythologiſt. It is this, that diſtinguiſhes the real poet; and one ſtroke of its plaſtic power diſcovers him more, than the greateſt magnificence of words, and pomp of deſcription.

We are told by the author of the beautiful eſſay upon the pleaſures of the imagination[b], "That "mankind receive more delight from the fancy "than from the underſtanding." Few are capable of pleaſures purely intellectual; and every creature is capable of being pleaſed or diſquieted in ſome degree by the fancy. Hence, plain naked truth is either not perceived, or ſoon diſreliſhed. But the man who can give his ideas life and colouring, and render the ſubtil relations and mutual influences of natural cauſes ſenſible and ſtriking; who can beſtow upon them a human appearance, and then weave them into a ſtrange and paſſionate ſtory; to him we liſten with wonder, and greedily learn his

[a] Plato, Πολιτείας Γ. [b] Spectator, Numb. 411.

ſoothing tale. We find a pleaſure in comparing it with the truth which it covers, and in conſidering the reſemblance it bears to the ſeveral parts of the allegory.

Orpheus had never been ſaid to have charmed the wildeſt beaſts of the woods, and to have made the rigid oaks keep time to his numbers, had he ſimply told the import of his ſong: had he acquainted his ſavage audience, "that time and ſpace were the "antienteſt things; that they had brought forth "many wild and ſtrange productions, ariſing from "the jarring natures and uncouth combinations "of the various ſeeds of being; but at length, in "time, the heavens appeared, with the air, the "earth, and ſeas; which were the laſt of things, "time having neither been able to deſtroy them "(as it had done its former productions), nor to "make additions to them, and bring forth the "like." Such doctrine as this had found no admiſſion into the minds, nor welcome from the fancy of the uncultivated croud: they could receive little pleaſure from the narration, and be impreſſed with no reverence for the ſubject.

But when, after ſtriking his lyre, and ſoftening every rude thought, he took up another ſtrain, and began to unfold the antient reign of hoary Saturn, the marvels of the golden age, and the ſtrange relation of his progeny; "How the old monarch was "married to Ops or Rhea, and had by her many "children; theſe the cruel father himſelf devour-

" ed ſoon after they were born; until at length " ſhe brought forth Jupiter and Juno, Ceres and " Neptune, who rebelled againſt their voracious " parent, made the beneficent Jupiter king, and " deprived Saturn for ever, both of the power to " deſtroy his new offspring, or yet to beget any " more:" It was then that the ſtubborn multitude opened their hearts to the wondrous tale; and with a pleaſing amazement received his ſayings: they conceived a high reverence for their teacher, and were ſtruck with an awe and dread of the deities which he ſung.

I am under a neceſſity of having recourſe to examples, becauſe the ſubject is of a nature ſo tickliſh and delicate, as not to admit of a direct definition: for if ever the *Je ne ſçais quoi* was rightly applied, it is to the powers of mythology, and the faculty that produces it. To go about to deſcribe it, would be like attempting inſpiration, or that glow of fancy and effuſion of ſoul, which a poet feels while in his fit; a ſenſation ſo ſtrong, that they expreſs it only by exclamations, adjurings, and rapture!

Auditis? An me ludit amabilis
Inſania? Audire et videor pios
Errare per Lucos, amœnæ
Quas et aquæ ſubeunt et auræ!

When a favourite of the muſes is in this condi-

tion, nature appears in her gayeſt dreſs; the nobleſt objects come in view; they turn out their beauteous ſides; he ſees their various poſitions, and ſtays for nothing but reſemblance to join them together. The torrent of the poetic paſſion is too rapid to ſuffer conſideration, and drawing of conſequences: if the images are but ſtrong enough, and have a happy colluſion, the mind joins them together with inconceivable avidity, and feels the joy of the diſcharge, like throwing off a burden, or deliverance from a preſſure [a].

But at the ſame time, this force and colluſion of imagery is ſuſceptible of very different meanings, and may be viewed in various, and even oppoſite lights: it often takes its riſe from likeneſs which hardly occurs to a cool imagination; and which we are apt to take for downright nonſenſe, when we are able to find no connexion between the ſtrange compariſon and its intended object. It is, in reality, the next thing to madneſs; obſcure and ambiguous, with intermixed flaſhes of truth, and intervals of ſenſe and deſign [b]. There is Ly-

[a] *At Phœbi nondum patiens, immanis in Antro*, etc.
The furious prieſteſs in her cavern foams,
Nor bears the God reluctant — but in rage,
Gaſping, ſhe tries to ſhake him from her breaſt;
The harder ſtill he reins her gnawing mouth,
Daunts her fierce heart, and pond'rous molds her thoughts.
VIRG. Æneid. lib. vi.

[b] Ἐσὶ δὲ φύσει ἡ Ποιητικὴ, etc. The whole of poeſy is naturally myſterious and enigmatical; nor is it the province of

cophron's Caſſandra, for inſtance; an admirable imitation of a prophetic fury, which is not ſo obſcure for being a prediction (having, like other heathen prophecies[a], foretold things that had fallen out before it was wrote:) but it is clouded by the dark manner of hinting at men and things, in ſuch reſemblances and alluſions, as render it one continued train of wild and daring metaphor.

But it is time, my Lord, to look back, and remember that we are treading upon enchanted ground; for ſo is every inch that belongs to the poets: and as we have lately been informed of certain countries where every thing in nature is reverſed, it is exactly the caſe here, where a little folly is preferable to the deepeſt wiſdom, and perſons of cool ſenſe are incapable of the higheſt honours: nor have the poſſeſſed any cauſe to complain, while they may comfort themſelves that they are not without company; and thoſe of the moſt eminent of mankind. "That there is a grain of folly "incident to great minds," is an obſervation not entirely confined to poetry; but extending itſelf to perſons that excel in every character of life: the

* every man to explain it: and beſides its being ſo by nature, * when it falls into the hands of an envious man, who does * not care to ſhew, but rather incline to hide, as much as poſ- * ſible, his wiſdom and knowlege, it is inconceivable how hard * a buſineſs it becomes, and how difficult to conjecture what * each of them on every point would be at.'

PLATO's Alcibid. book ii.

[a] See Ariſtotle's Rhetor. lib. iii. §. 17. of Epimenides.

ſame flow of ſpirits, and energy of thought, which enable them to excel in ſcience, and reach the heights of their profeſſion, hurrying them often beyond the common meaſures of ordinary life; by which alone the vulgar judge of wiſdom and folly. In natural knowlege it makes a Democritus or an Archimedes, who were ſometimes thought a little crazy by their countrymen. But when it was applied to what they thought divine matters, it aſſumed a more venerable habit and ſeverer mien: it then required ſubmiſſion and obedience [a]: yet ſtill, it preſerved ſomething of the air and look of the original paſſion; ſomething of the ecſtatic manner of an agitated mind. This is ſo true, that thoſe who were inclined to falſify the character, and wanted to paſs themſelves upon mankind for the truly inſpired, were obliged to adopt likewiſe the appearance, and affect a maddiſh behaviour, to give a ſanction to the cheat [b].

[a] *Sic fieri jubet ipſe Deus; ſic magna ſacerdos*, etc.
So God himſelf commands, the prieſteſs ſo
Of great Bellona propheſy'd divine.
She, when the Goddeſs moves, infuriate grown,
Fears neither rattling flames, nor knotty ſcourge;
She wounds her ſtreaming arms with many a gaſh,
And ſtands before the blood-beſprinkled ſhrine;
She ſtands her ſide thruſt through, her boſom gor'd,
And ſings, taught by the Goddeſs, things to come.
TIBUL. Eleg. 1, 6.

[b] —— *Bona pars non ungues ponere curat*, etc.
—————— For this good reaſon,
Some brother bards care not to ſhave their beards,

What may be the appearances, or aſpects of things natural or divine, which have the virtue thus to ſhake our frame, and raiſe ſuch a commotion in the ſoul, I will not ſo much as enquire: the ſearch, I ſhould ſuſpect, would be fruitleſs, if not irreverent[a]: it would be like prying into the author of fairy-favours, which deprives the curious enquirer of his preſent enjoyment, while the courted phantom mocks his eager graſp, or preſents him with a turf, or ſtone, inſtead of a Goddeſs. The objects, they ſay, of this paſſion, diſcover themſelves, like a coy beauty[b], but by halves; it is well if you obtain a ſide-glance, or a paſſing ſmile: they cannot bear to be ſtared at, and far leſs to be criticized, and taken to pieces: it is unlawful to doubt of their charms, and the ready way to elude their force, and rob ourſelves of the delightful aſtoniſhment. But this far perhaps we may preſume to carry our enquiry without offence, and venture to ſay, that the original cauſe of this paſſion muſt be ſome wondrous ſublime thing, ſince it produces ſuch

> Nor pare their nails; but ſhun the eyes of men;
> Seldom appear at plays, or public walks:
> For ſo the name and dignity of poet
> Is to be gain'd. —— —— HOR. de Arte Poet.

[a] Καθόλυ μὲν γὰρ ἐν ταῖς, etc. 'In general, through 'the whole of hiſtoric mythology, we ought by no means to 'be too nice in ſifting the truth, nor too moroſe in going a'bout to confute the legend by every argument that can be 'brought againſt it.' DIOD. SICUL. book iv.

Non copri ſue Bellezze, e non l' eſpoſe.
She neither hid, nor yet expoſed her charms. TASSO.

admired effects: its dictates, in many places, are received with profound ſubmiſſion, and the perſons touched with it are held in high veneration.

Modern hiſtory informs us of certain countries, where they pay a devout regard to mad people. They look upon them as favoured with ſome nearer aſpects of heavenly things than are allowed to other men, and as having ſomewhat about them ſacred and divine. As I do not pretend to account for this ſtrange opinion, I can only, as it were, gueſs, by parallel caſes, what may be the reaſon of it: and without going ſo far back as the prophetic Sibyls, or the truth-telling, but diſregarded Caſſandra, we find abundance of examples in later antiquity, of the deference paid to the ecſtatic race. The antient Greeks have expreſſed the ſenſe they had of their condition, by the very name they gave them[a]: from its origin we know how inſeparable they thought the ſymptoms of mythology and madneſs. They ſaw the perſons under either paſſion, neither looking nor ſpeaking like other mortals: they were amazed at their change of voice and feature; and could not perſuade themſelves, but that they muſt be actuated by ſome higher genius than was competent to mankind.

But it was not only the appearance that ſtruck them; they were led into the ſame way of thinking, by the imagined effects of this paſſion. Some of the

[a] MANTIΣ.

proficients in it, they thought capable to inform them of the will of heaven, and deſcribe the deeds of heaven-born heroes: others of them, to foretel what would happen on earth; and eaſily inferred the ſacredneſs of the cauſe from its wonderful and beneficent influence. They were not able to imagine that mere humanity could penetrate into the depths of futurity, or unravel that combination of cauſes, which they called chance: their acuteſt obſervers could diſcover no path to guide them through the abyſs of ages, to the fates of families and nations latent in the womb of time[a]: of courſe, therefore, they admired the darkeſt hint given by an oracle, and received the moſt diſtant notice of an approaching event, as a meſſage from heaven. "We reap, ſays the philoſopher, notable advan-
"tages from madneſs, which comes to us as a gift
"of the Gods. There is, for inſtance, the pro-
"pheteſs of Delphi, and the prieſteſſes of Dodona,
"who in their madneſs have done great and ſignal
"ſervices to Greece, both of a public and private
"nature, but little or nothing when in their wits.
"It would be tedious to enter upon the ſtory of
"the Sibyls, or tell of many others, who, under
"the power of a furious divining ſpirit, have fore-

[a] Πρήγματος ἀπρήκτυ χαλεπώτατόν, etc.
Of things to come, 'tis hard to know the end;
Or how th' Almighty means it to fulfill:
A vail of darkneſs human ſight defends,
And marks the narrow limits of our skill.
SIMONIDES

" warned numbers of people of things that were
" to come. At times there fell upon certain fami-
" lies ſome cruel diſtempers, or other ſevere afflic-
" tion, to puniſh them for the crimes of their pro-
" genitors; but if any of them is ſeized with this
" ecſtatic ſpirit, and begin to propheſy, a cure is
" found: they fly to prayers and holy ceremonies,
" and light upon certain expiatory and myſtic rites
" which free the perſon thus inſpired, and is a
" ſtanding remedy in all ſuch caſes to poſterity.

" But the moſt beautiful madneſs, and amiable
" poſſeſſion, is, when the love of the muſes ſeiz-
" es upon a ſoft and ſuſceptible mind: it is then
" that it exalts the ſoul, and throwing it into
" ecſtaſies, makes it break forth in hymns and
" ſongs, or other ſtrains of poeſy, and at once cele-
" brate the high atchievements of antient times,
" and inſtruct the generations to come. This is
ſo certain, that whoever he be that pretends to
the favours of the muſe, without partaking of
this madneſs, from an opinion perhaps, that art
alone is ſufficient to make a poet, he may aſſure
himſelf that he will fail in his character; his
work will be lame; and while the productions
of the inſpired ecſtatic train are read and admir-
ed, his ſober performance will ſink in oblivi-
on [a]."

Let us acquieſce in this ſentence, my Lord, in ſo

[a] Plato in Phaedro.

far as it regards poetry; and after a fruitleſs attempt or two, get looſe at laſt from an infectious ſubject.

SECT. X.

I HAVE ſomewhere read of a famous painter, who, to give proof of his art, had painted a ſleeping ſatyr; that after the firſt deſign was finiſhed, he began to think it might be proper to diverſify and enliven it, with the addition of a country boy ſtanding aſide and gazing at the creature, as afraid to awake him. He tried it; and expreſſed ſo happily the curioſity and wonder in the innocent face of the young peaſant, that when the picture was expoſed to view, and the people came flocking to ſee it, their whole attention turned upon the adjunct of the piece: they admired the wondering boy, were delighted with the native ſimplicity and ſurprize in his look: and all the maſter's art, in expreſſing the character and uncouth proportions of the principal figure, was overlooked and thrown away.

I make little doubt but this may be frequently the caſe of thoſe who attempt to deſign after moral originals, as well as natural ones. They enter ſo deeply into one paſſion or biaſs of human

that, to uſe the painters phraſe, they quite overcharge it. Thus I have ſeen a whole ſyſtem of morals founded upon a ſingle pillar of the inward frame; and the entire conduct of life, and all characters in it, accounted for, ſometimes from ſuperſtition, ſometimes from pride, and moſt commonly from intereſt. They forget how various a creature it is they are painting; how many ſprings and weights, nicely adjuſted and balanced, enter into the movement, and require a juſt allowance to be made to their ſeveral clogs and impulſes, ere you can define its operation and effects. But few of them are willing to acknowlege ſo much; and, like the honeſt painter, go and daſh out the ſuperfluous boy, how beautiful ſoever in himſelf, becauſe he eclipſes the principal repreſentation.

Whether any ſuch enormity has happened in ſome ſtep or other of this enquiry, or whether it would be worth while to lop off the excreſcence, if it prove troubleſome, I ſubmit to your Lordſhip's determination. All I wiſh for, is a ſhort demur in the ſentence, until we regain a cooler temper to conduct us to the end of the ſearch, and to teach us, what uſe is to be made of the mad mythological vein? A chief part of Homer's works cannot be underſtood without ſome knowlege of its nature and origin, nor taſted without a conſciouſneſs of his dexterity in the application. Even the lively author of the Dialogues of the Dead, with all his penetrati-

on, has put it as a maxim in the mouth of the poet, "That as it is the beſt way to propheſy of diſtant "things, and wait for events to fulfil it; ſo in "poetry, there is nothing like ſending forth a fable "into the world, in hopes that ſome time or other "it may ſtumble upon an allegory."

Mythology, taken in the largeſt ſenſe, muſt be diſtinguiſhed into two ſorts: the one abſtracted and cool; the reſult of great ſearch and ſcience: "Being a compariſon of the harmony and diſcord, "the reſemblance and diſſimilitude of the powers "and parts of the univerſe." It often conſiſts of their fineſt proportions and hidden aptitudes ſet together, and perſonated by a being acting like a mortal. "The other, ſudden and flaſhy; rapid feel-"ings, and ſtarts of a paſſion not in our power." The firſt of theſe may be called artificial, and the ſecond natural mythology; the one is a ſcience, and may be learned; the other is the faculty that for the moſt part, if not always, invents and expreſſes it. This laſt cannot be learned; but like other natural powers, admits of culture and improvement. "The uſe I would make of ſuch a "diviſion is to obſerve, that Homer had the hap-"pieſt opportunities the world could give, to ac-"quire the one, and improve the other."

It is but calling to mind his climate and parentage, his education and buſineſs, to be perſuaded of the fair chance he had for a noble capacity and a proportioned culture. They conſpired to bleſs

him with ſo powerful an influence, that the ſagacious Democritus, ſtruck with admiration of his genius, and its effects, ſaid in a happily invented word, *That it approached to Divinity* [a]. And as for acquired knowlege in the mythological way, had he been to range over the globe, he could have pitched upon no country, in any age before or ſince, ſo proper for his inſtruction as the then kingdom of Egypt.

In Egypt he might learn their doctrine concerning the origin of things; he would be informed of the antiquity of Pan, and the inventions of Thoth: he would hear their ſtatute-ſongs and legal hymns, handed down for thouſands of years, and containing the principles of their primitive theology: the nature of the elements, the influences of the planets, the courſe of the year, and inſtincts of animals. How attentively would he liſten to the ſongs of their goddeſs! — the compoſitions of the beneficent Iſis [b]; who, while on earth, condeſcended thus to employ the muſes, and preſcribe the form in which ſhe would be worſhipped after ſhe was gone! Theſe he would imbibe; and, like ſome young Druid come over from Gaul to ſtudy under the Britiſh prieſts, the ſenior doctors of their oral my-

[a] Ὁμηρὸς Φυσιως λαχὼν Θειαζουσης. Διων. Λογος, νϛ.

[b] Ἐκεῖ φασι, etc. 'They aſſert in Egypt, that the ſacred hymns, preſerved among them ſo long a time, were compoſed by the goddeſs Iſis.' PLATO's Laws, book ii.

ſteries, he would return to his country fully inſtructed, and a maſter in their emblematical mythology.

Never was there a people ſo addicted to metaphor and alluſion: their very method of writing or ſacred ſculpture, was a complete and ſtanding ſyſtem of natural ſimiles's. "It was an immenſe collecti-
"on of all the relations, and analogous circum-
"ſtances, they could find in a long courſe of ob-
"ſervation, between human affairs, and the na-
"ture and make of birds, beaſts, fiſhes, reptiles,
"inſects, or whatever animated or inanimated
"thing they imagined moſt conſonant in its man-
"ners and œconomy to what they wanted to re-
"preſent."

Thus when they would ſignify a dutiful child, they painted a ſtork; becauſe that bird, as they fancied, being fed by its dam, and taught to fly, never afterwards leaves her, but accompanies and tends her until ſhe die of old age. When they had a mind to repreſent a woman that had been once with child, they painted a lioneſs; becauſe they believed that animal to conceive but once. When they deſigned to paint a man univerſally hated and ſhunned, they drew an eel, which is found in company with no other fiſh.

They had likewiſe a ſingular way of expreſſing abſtracted ideas; ſuch as pleaſure and pain, impoſſibility, antiquity, happineſs, and the like. Thus, to expreſs pleaſure, they painted the number ſixteen, which they looked upon as the year of life when

mankind is capable of mutual enjoyment. For an impoſſibility, they delineated two feet walking upon water, and to denote any thing very antient, they painted a bundle of their papyrus, a plant which they thought the firſt food of mortals, before the invention of corn, or eating of fleſh. Sometimes their characters did not only contain a ſimple expreſſion of a fact, or the manner of it, but likewiſe exhibited the reaſons and cauſe; eſpecially if it was a natural appearance that happened in their country, or any thing relating to the diviſion of time, or the revolutions of the heavenly bodies.

Thus, in order to explain the overflowing of the Nile, they firſt painted a lion; becauſe the inundation of Egypt happens conſtantly in June, when the ſun is in that ſign of the Zodiac. Under him ſtood three water-veſſels; and the figure of a heart with a tongue, in the midſt of them. The three urns, neither more nor leſs in number, denoted the three cauſes, as they conceived, concurring in the production of the phenomenon. One they aſcribed to the ſoil of Egypt; of ſuch a nature, they ſaid, as to generate moiſture in itſelf: the ſecond ſtood for the influence of the ocean, whoſe waves, according to Thales, were then impelled into the river's mouth by the Eteſian winds: though that part aſſigned to the ocean may rather favour the opinion of Euthymenes, "That the Nile takes its riſe from "the Atlantic, and yearly overflows its banks, at "at the ſeaſon when theſe winds beat upon the

" coaſt, and drive a greater quantity of water into " the mouth of the cavern that feeds it [a]." The third urn expreſſed the true cauſe of the annual deluge; the prodigious rains that fall about that time in the ſouthern parts of Ethiopia, and are gathered by a large circle of mountains into the baſon or lake, where the Nile has its origin. Theſe make it ſwell above its banks, and lay the Lower Egypt under water for three months in the year [b].

The heart was an emblem of the Nile itſelf, as it gave life and motion to Egypt, in the ſame manner as the other does to the human body: and the annexed tongue repreſented humidity, the great cauſe of their happineſs; and according to them and their ſcholars [c], the firſt conſtituent principle of being.

Theſe, my Lord, are a few examples of the enigmatical humour of the Egyptians. I could with pleaſure add to them, both for the curioſity of what they contain, and becauſe they abound with image-

[a] *Navigavi Atlanticum mare*, etc. 'I have ſailed the Atlantic ocean: — out of it the Nile flows, and increaſes during the ſeaſon of the Eteſian wind: for then the ſea-water is forced out in greater quantity by the ſtrength of the winds; but when they ceaſe, and the ocean ſubſides, then the flood in the river likewiſe abates. Moreover, the taſte of that ſea is ſweetiſh, and the monſters in it reſemble thoſe found in the Nile.' EUTH. MASSIL. ap. Sen. Nat. Quaeſt. lib. iv. §. 2.

[b] Ὡραπολλωνος Νειλωου Ἱερογλυφικα, Βιβ. α. κεφ. κα.

[c] Thales, and the Ionic School.

ry, and fill the mind with more ſenſations than any other kind of writing. I could run over the ſurprizing reſemblance they found between the ſun and a puny inſect, the common beetle, in its generation, inſtinct, and parts. I could relate the ſympathy they obſerved between the moon at her change, and the cynocephalus or ape; an animal, as they ſaid, deſigned by nature for a ſacred ſymbol, in ſo far as it comes into the world circumciſed like an Egyptian prieſt: and from theſe, and ſuch like, we might explain a part of the reaſon of their monſtrous ſtatues, and baboon-worſhip[a]. But an apprehenſion ſtops me, leſt it be ſaid, that all this while I am but indulging a conjecture, and pleaſing myſelf with an imaginary ſcheme; "That Homer "never learned the Egyptian mythology, neither "does it appear, that he knew the grounds of their "religion."

[a] The opinion which the wiſe and learned Plutarch entertained of their rites and religious ceremonies, is ſomething ſingular. Οὐδὲν γὰρ ἄλογον, οὐδὲ μυθῶδες, οὐδὲ ὑπὸ δεισιδαιμονίας (ὥσπερ ἔνιοι νομίζουσι) ἐγκατέσποιχαῦτο Ἱερουργίαις· ἀλλὰ τὰ μὲν ἠθικὰς ἔχοντα ἢ χρειώδεις αἰτίας, τὰ δ' ἐκ ἄμοιρα κομψότητος Ἱστορικῆς ἢ Φυσικῆς ἐστὶν: and the very example he ſubjoins is, οἷον τὸ περὶ Κρομμυου, the regard they pay to the Onion. 'The Egyptians, ſays he, have inſerted nothing into their 'worſhip without a reaſon, nothing merely fabulous, nothing 'ſuperſtitious, (as many ſuppoſe;) but their inſtitutions have 'either a reſpect to morals, or to ſomething uſeful in life; 'and many of them bear a beautiful reſemblance of ſome fact 'in hiſtory, or of ſome appearances in nature.'

Πλυτ. περὶ Ἴσιδος & Ὀσιριδος.

The argument of the greateſt weight to prove that he did, is taken from the allegories that are found in his writings. They contain the ſame doctrine and theogony as we are well aſſured was delivered by Orpheus, and in the ſame veiled and myſtic manner: ſo that with the ſame certainty as we can ſay, ſuch a man is a ſtoic, another an Epicurean, and another a ſceptic, we can affirm, that Homer is an Egyptian mythologiſt. We immediately ſuſpect a man to be a diſciple of a particular ſect, and inſtructed in this or the other ſchool, from his way of writing, and uſing the terms peculiar to that ſect. But if we find him building likewiſe upon the ſame principles, and delivering the ſame maxims, we no longer doubt of his preceptor.

The Egyptian religion and doctrines were ſettled in the ſouthern parts of Greece, by Danaus and his poſterity. Afterwards Orpheus, Muſæus, Melampus, and their ſucceſſors, ſpread them over all the country. Homer, who came after them, made no change upon thoſe rites and opinions: and yet we find his writings appealed to, as the ſtandard of their private belief, and grand directory of public worſhip. Is not this the ſame as to ſay, "That "Homer's poetry contains the ſame principles and "precepts with thoſe of the Egyptian theologue, "and was the perfecteſt collection of them the "Grecians had in writing?" Nor are there wanting other proofs, not only of our poet's following

the general doctrine of the Egyptians, and of the Grecian law-giver their ſcholar, but plainly borrowing images and deſcriptions from him, and inſerting them in his poetry: eſpecially, if your Lordſhip will take it upon the word of the early fathers of our church, it will be eaſy to make out nothing leſs than downright plagiariſm.

"Homer, ſays one of them [a], ſtretching his pri-
"vilege as a poet, and from an emulation of the
"glory which Orpheus had acquired, myſtically
"introduces a plurality of Gods, that he might
"not appear to diſſent from the other's poetry.
"He has copied him ſo cloſe, that the reſemblance
"appears in the very firſt line of his works: Or-
"pheus having begun his poem with

Μηνιν Αειδε Θεα Δημητερος Αγλαοκαρπου;

Homer copies

Μηνιν Αειδε Θεα Πηληιαδεω Αχιληος:

"chooſing rather to offend in the meaſure of his
"verſe, than to be the firſt that made mention of
"the name of the Gods."

Another primitive writer [b] hath recorded ſeveral inſtances of his borrowing largely both from Orpheus and Muſæus. He informs us, that Orpheus having ſaid a very harſh thing of the fair ſex,

Ὡς οὐ κύντερον ἦν, καὶ ῥίγιον ἄλλο γυναικος.

Nothing ſo fierce and impudent as woman:

Homer had juſt changed a word, and ſaid,

[a] Juſtin Martyr. [b] Clemens Alexandrin. Strom. 8.

Ὡς οὐκ ἀναιδέστερον οὐδὲ κυνῶπιν ἄλλο γυναικός.
Nothing ſo dire and impudent as woman.

And that as Muſæus firſt employed the beautiful and juſt compariſon of the growth and decay of the leaves of trees, to expreſs the tranſitory ſtate of mortals, Homer had but tranſcribed it in the ſixth Iliad, "That as the wind ſtrewed the leaves upon "the ground, and the ſprouting wood ſent forth "others at the approach of ſpring; ſo one genera-"tion of men fails, and another comes in its room." The father gives ſome other examples of the ſame kind; particularly the noble deſcription of the Cyclops falling aſleep; which, he ſays, Homer took from Orpheus's repreſentation of Saturn in the Theogony:

Κεῖτ' ἀποδοχμώσας παχὺν αὐχένα, καδδὲ μιν ὕπνος
Ἥρῃ παναμάτωρ ———
——— *Out-ſtretch'd he lay,*
His brawny neck reclin'd; then ſunk in ſleep,
The all-ſubduing God.

With what views theſe antient authors have made ſuch obſervations, or how far they have ſucceeded in them, is a queſtion remote from our preſent ſubject: only ſo far we may preſume to uſe their authority in ſecular matters, as they firſt intended to prove, "That Homer was not himſelf the author "of the polytheiſm which he ſung, nor the inven-"ter of his religious and philoſophical allegories; "but had received them, at firſt or ſecond hand, "from the Egyptians."

In this reſpect, it would not be difficult for any body who is acquainted with Homer's writings, and who looks over the few fragments of Orpheus, to make other remarks to the ſame purpoſe. As for inſtance, that beautiful deſcription of heaven, ſo juſtly admired, aud tranſcribed by Ariſtotle:

Ουλυμπονδ' Οθι φασι Θεων Εδος.

Radiant from heaven he came;—the bleſt abodes,
And ſeat unſhaken of th' immortal Gods:
The happy land, where tempeſts never blow,
Nor chilling ſhowers deſcend, nor fleecy ſnow;
Th' unclouded ſky ſmiles with perpetual day,
And light eternal darts a gladdening ray.

This deſcription bears a great reſemblance to thoſe lines of the Theologue, (ſo the antients called Orpheus:)

——— Διωκισε δ' ανδρωπους ———
Χωρις απ' αθανατων, ναιειν εδος.

——— *Th' abodes of men*
He ſever'd from th' immortals, to poſſeſs
A bliſsful ſeat, exempt from all exceſs:
Where from above no chilling cold is ſent,
Nor ſcorching ardour fires the element;
Where Phebus' axle rowls the middle reod,
And temperate mildneſs dwells beneath the God.

Here the thought is the ſame, and ſeveral of the names.

In the fragments that paſs under the name of the ſame author, we have examples of thoſe hidden pieces of art employed by our poet, to give his

work an air of divinity and inſpiration. Such is the invocation of his muſe at the beginning of his poem, and his mentioning the celeſtial appellations of men and things, as if he had underſtood the languauge of the Gods. As to the firſt, beſides what is told above, there is another addreſs to his genius recorded by Tzetzes:

Νῦν δ' ἄγε μοὶ κάρη Λειβηθεὺς ἔνεπε Μῦσα,

where the epithet comes from a mountain in Thrace, in the Odryſian country. For the ſecond, Briareus's two names are later than the moon's:

Μήσατο δ' ἄλλην γαῖαν ἀπείρατον, ἣν τε Σελήνην
Ἀθάνατοι καλέουσιν Ἐπιχθόνιοι δέ τε Μήνην,
Ἣ πολλὰ ὄυρεά ἔχει, πολλὰ ἄστεα, πολλὰ μέλαθρα.

Another earth of boundleſs ſize he form'd,
Selene call'd in heaven; but the tribes
Of men term it the Moon: ſhe, like this globe,
Has many hills, and towns, and lofty roofs.

But however theſe things may be, whether coincidences from chance, or imitations ariſing from a parity of principles and manners, we may ſafely conclude, that Homer drew his mythology from theſe three ſources: Firſt, from the form of worſhip already eſtabliſhed in his country: Secondly, from the traditional doctrines of Orpheus and Melampus, who firſt formed the Grecian ceremonies, and gave that people a notion of immortality: And laſtly, which was the parent of the other two, from the Egyptian learning.

I would not be underſtood in this, as if I affirmed that Homer had gone through a courſe of hieroglyphics in Egypt: perhaps that ſcience was not then brought to ſuch perfection, as it afterwards attained; though their high pretenſions to antiquity and legal inſtitutions in religion ſeem to aſſure us that it was. But the deſign of the examples in that way, was to ſhew their manner of thinking and writing upon natural and religious ſubjects: from which of conſequence we muſt ſuppoſe, that if Homer was among them, as it appears he was, a man ſo capable and inquiſitive, could not return without learning ſomething of their rites, and the reaſons of them; that is, of their mythology.

With reſpect to the traditional part of his inſtruction, it may be aſked, How it was preſerved in times of ſuch ignorance and diſorder? And thro' what channels it could be conveyed to Homer? Though this queſtion be upon the matter anſwered already, and that the age in which he lived is too remote, to allow us to ſpeak with certainty of his inſtructor; yet we can give an account of ſome great men who had the honour to paſs for his teachers, and were named as ſuch by the learned and wiſe among the antients.

And firſt, Pronapides of Athens is given for his maſter[a]. Diodorus the Sicilian, whoſe authority is doubly valuable, as an hiſtorian and a critic, honours him with the appellation of Μελοποιὸς Εὐφυὴς[b]; and adds that he had written in the Pelaſgic character,

[a] Biblioth. lib. iii. [b] A poet of a fine genius.

in imitation of Linus and his ſcholars: that his ſubject was likewiſe the ſame; *The primeval ſtate of nature;* which he accordingly inſcribed Πρωτογονια, *The firſt world.*

— After him, Ariſteus the famous northern traveller has the faireſt pretenſions. He was a native of Proconneſus, a little iſland in the Propontis, near the ancient Cyzicus; a delicious place, and partaking of the bleſſings of that happy climate. Invited by this ſituation, which lay juſt oppoſite to Thrace, he viſited that country, wandered a great way up among the Scythians, and was the firſt who gave the Greeks any knowlege of the northern nations. He compoſed, at his return, the Αριμασπεια επη, *Arimaſpian poetry;* containing an account of the ſeveral tribes of the Barbarians he had gone through, and particularly, of the *One-eyed Arimaſpians*, as he calls them, *the fierceſt of men*[c].

After this, Ariſteus made a voyage weſtward, and viewed Italy, at that time almoſt as barbarous as the Scythians themſelves; and both at home and in his travels, he ſeems to have performed ſome feats of an extraordinary nature[d], which raiſed the wonder of his contemporaries, and made him be looked upon as a god, or at leaſt as a divine man. This opinion would not be weakened by his writing

[c] Herodot. Melp. lib. iv.

[d] Αριστεας ὁ ποιητης, etc. 'Ariſteas, the author of the Arimaſpian poems, as they are commonly called, — a quack, if ever there was one in the world.' STRABO's Geog. lib. 13.

a Theogony, like the reſt of the ancient ſages; and exerciſing himſelf in a field, where anciently philoſophy and religion ſtrove which would moſt aſſiſt the other, and made an effort in common for the good of mankind.

Between thoſe two, Pronapides and Ariſteus, lies the claim of inſtructing Homer. Creophilus too is named as a competitor; but his pretenſions had better been ſmothered, as we ſaw formerly. How to determine between the remaining pretenders, ſurpaſſes my abilities; and I muſt in this particular join with an author, who, though an admirer of our poet, has exerciſed his eloquence, in proving him unjuſt to the Trojans, and injurious to the beauteous Helen. It is Dion Chryſoſtome I mean, who gives it as his opinion, " That as the preciſe time " and place of his birth was not certainly known " among the Greeks, ſo it was likewiſe a queſtion, " *Who had been his maſter in wiſdom and poetry* [b] *?*"

But there is another channel ſtill, through which this kind of ſcience might flow down to Homer; not indeed directly from Egypt, but from a Phenician or Egyptian Colony. Your lordſhip knows the invidious ſtory that goes of Hippocrates the father of medicine: It was a cuſtom among the ancients, when any one recovered of a diſeaſe, to write or

[b] Ὁμήρῳ μὲν γὰρ, ὥσπερ τὰ ἄλλα τὰ περὶ αὐτὸν, καὶ τοῦτο ἄδηλον τοῖς Ἕλλησιν, Dion. Chryſoſt.

engrave an account of their cure upon a tablet, and hang it up in the temple of Eſculapius, in ſign of gratitude to the God, who they thought had directed them to the remedy. Theſe tablets, they ſay, containing the hiſtory of all ſorts of diſtempers, and their method of cure, Hippocrates peruſed; and having made himſelf maſter of the knowlege they afforded, afterwards ſet fire to the temple, that he might enjoy ſuch a treaſure, without a rival.

Much of the ſame kind is the account we have of Homer's inſtruction; only he ſpared the records from which he drew it. It was in the firſt or ſecond generation after Oedipus, ſays Diodorus, that Thebes was ſacked a ſecond time by Alcmæon. "Among the captives he carried off, was the old "blind prophet Tireſias, who died by the way: "but his daughter, the celebrated Manto, was ſent "to Delphi as a part of the ſpoil. She was no leſs "ſkilled in divination than her father; and while ſhe "ſtayed in Apollo's temple, made great improve-"ments in the art. She was favoured by the "God; and having a wonderful genius, compoſed "Oracles of all kinds, and in different forms, al-"legorical, prophetical, and moral. Theſe were "preſerved in the temple; and from them, ſays ed upon as a God, or at leaſt as a divine man. This opinion would not be weakened by his writing

" the hiſtorian, *Homer borrowed many verſes, and* " *inſerted them as ornaments into his own poetry* [a]."

How imaginary ſoever this inſinuation may appear, it would be raſh to condemn it as entirely groundleſs. It carries indeed in its face, a certain air of fable; but if narrowly viewed, and the circumſtances weighed, I believe it will be allowed to bear an application of the proverb, " That if not " true, it is at leaſt well contrived." The foundation of the ſtory, that is, Alcmæon's expedition; the ſacking of Thebes; its deſolation long after, even during the Trojan war, are certain and undoubted facts: the neighbourhood of the Delphic oracle; the ſuppoſed ſanctity of that place; and the conſtant cuſtom of the country to ſend a part of the booty to Apollo, make the ſubſequent parts of it look probable.

But when we take in the other preſumptions, ariſing from the Oracle itſelf, and from Homer's own works, it becomes difficult for us to refuſe our aſſent: as firſt, that the places where hymns, ſongs, pæans, and poetry in general was uſed and known, were anciently no other than the temples and altars of the Gods: the temple of Apollo in particular, which Homer in his hymn to Diana calls *the plentiful habitation of the Delphi*, was the place where, he ſays, " the ſiſter of Phebus uſed to come, and cele-

[a] Diodorus, book iv.

"brate the meeting of the muſes and the graces [a]." Next, that the Θεσφατα or *Sayings* of the God were preſerved with a peculiar care: they were inſcribed ſometimes in wood, and ſometimes in plates of metal, and hung up on the pillars that encloſed the Αδυτον or *Sanctuary*. Nay Plutarch aſſures us, that there was commonly about the temple at Delphi, a ſet of men of a poetical turn, whoſe buſineſs it was to ſit round the oracle on ſolemn days, and receive the voice from Pythia's mouth, which they were afterwards to wrap up in a vehicle of words, in what phraſe and meaſure they thought convenient [b].

"For ſuch were the manners, continues the hu-
"mane philoſopher, of theſe early times, and ſo
"general was the propenſity to harmony and num-
"bers, that every ſcience was delivered in verſe:
"nothing in hiſtory, nothing in philoſophy, and
"in a word, no accident or tranſaction that want-
"ed voice and deſcription, but what wore the garb

[a] Αυτὰρ ἐπὴν τερφθῇ θηροσκόπος Ἰοχεαιρα, etc.
But when the Goddeſs of the chace forſakes
Her pleaſure, and unbends her ſilver bow,
To Delphi's wealthy ſhrine her courſe ſhe takes,
To guide the ſweeteſt chorus earth can ſhow;
Muſes and Graces mix'd. Ὁμηρ. εἰς Ἀρτεμιν.

[b] This is confirmed by Strabo: Πυθίαν δεχομένην, etc. 'Pythia, having received the inſpiration or blaſt, utters prophecies both in verſe and proſe; but the latter are put into metre by certain poets, retainers to the temple.'

STRABO, book 9.

" of the muſes, and in it was admired. Nor for
" certain, did the Delphian God refuſe the loved
" ornament to his own art, or drive the divine
" muſe from the ſacred Tripod: he invited her to
" it, and fanned the poetic fire: he cheriſhed the
" pregnant breaſt, inſpired it with images, and ex-
" alted the myſterious ſublime of the ſoul, until
" it burſt forth in ſtrains befitting his ſhrine."

But this is not all: we know from Homer's own mouth, that this very temple was in high reputation long before his days: that it was honoured by the adjacent nations, conſulted by princes, and had arrived at an immenſe pitch of wealth and fame. We find in the Odyſſey, that Agamemnon had conſulted it in perſon, before he undertook the expedition to Troy[a]: and in the Iliad, Achilles tells the ambaſſadors, from that prince (Agamemnon) " That he would not marry his daughter,
" though ſhe had the beauty of Venus, and the
" ſkill of Minerva; that he would have no peace
" with him, nor part in the war; that he was re-
" ſolved to go home to Pythia, and ſhun his im-
" pending fate; ſince his life was of more worth
" to him than all the wealth within the walls of

[a] Ὡς γὰρ χρήων μυθήσατο Φοῖβος Ἀπόλλων, etc.
For ſo bright Phoebus had foretold their fate,
That day he trod the ſtony temple's gate
Of holy Pythos: then the bitter root
Of woe began to ſhoot to Greece and Troy.
ODYSSEY, ix.

" Troy; and (to inhance the compariſon) *more*
" *than all the treaſures that are preſerved within*
" *the ſtone-built gate of the rocky Pythos, the abode*
" *of the ſoothſaying Apollo*[a]."

This is Homer's deſcription of the ſituation of the oracle: when we compare it with the accounts left us by hiſtorians and travellers[b], it appears ſo natural and juſt, that we eaſily believe the poet muſt have had the rough aſpect of the mountain in his eye, and repreſented the building from the view of the ſtately original. Or if this belief ſhould be thought fond or illuſive, it is not impoſſible to heighten the evidence: but upon condition, that we remember the want of records already mentioned; and that they had in thoſe days no other method of knowing the tranſactions of former ages, than by tradition and converſe with the guardians of knowlege.

With ſuch aſſiſtance it is eaſy to make out Homer's acquaintance with Delphi. To him we owe our information of the antiquity and firſt ſettlement of that ſacred ſeat: from him we learn, " What
" wiſe nation or artful people were then able to
" project ſuch an eſtabliſhment; or endowed with
" the addreſs neceſſary for executing the great de-
" ſign of explaining the purpoſes of heaven, and

[a] Iliad. ix.

[b] Δελφοὶ, etc. ' Delphi is a rocky place in the form of a ' theatre, with the oracle at the top'. Strabo, book ix. See alſo Pauſanias, Phocis.

" foretelling the fortunes of men." A little reflection will tell us, they could hardly be Greeks: the Grecian tribes had not as yet attained the ordinary arts of life; much less had they reached this height of human policy [a]. Or if it was a Grecian settlement, the planters must have been some exception from the rule; some privileged nation, and the first instructed in religion and government.

It was so; —— and to make amends for the silence or trifling of succeeding historians, Homer hath assured us, that the founders of this prophetic colony were Cretans. " There were many of them, " he says, and goodly men, who came in a ship from " Cnossus the city of Minos, and were chosen by A- " pollo to offer sacrifices, and pronounce the oracles " of the God of the golden Tripod; whatever Phœbus " should utter, when he prophesied from the Lau- " rel, under the hollow of Parnassus [b]." And that we may not doubt of the manner in which this was done, he tells, that they sung such Pæans or Hymns of praise,

Ὅιοί τε Κρητων Παιηονες, οἷσί τε Μοῦσα
Ἐν ςήθεσιν ἔθηκε Θεὰ μελιγήρυν ἀοιδήν.

[a] See page 29. and Section II. throughout.

[b] Ομήρυ Ὕμνος εἰς Ἀπόλλ. It is exactly Strabo's description of the Oracle, Φασὶ δ' εἶναι τὸ μαντεῖον, etc. 'The oracle itself is a hollow cave, not sloping, but a direct precipice downward, with a narrow kind of mouth, out of which there issues an enthusiastic gale, or wind that renders men prophetical.'

As Cretans wont to ſing; whoſe breaſt the muſe
Hath fill'd, divine, with ever-flowing verſe.

Such was the firſt eſtabliſhment of the Delphic oracle. It came to be quickly in repute with its neareſt neighbours; and in not a great many years, Greece was full of the fame of its ſanctity and truth. Preſents of immenſe value came pouring in, from Italy on one hand, and from Aſia on the other hand. And when theſe treaſures were touched, or any indignity was offered the temple, the public was ſure to eſpouſe the quarrel, and make a holy war in its defence. But the greateſt honour it had, was to be the place of aſſembly of the Amphictyons, or great council of Greece. They were deputies ſent from the ſovereign ſtates, to conſult in common the general welfare of their country, and determine differences between the jarring cities.

While they were aſſembled, the Pythian games were celebrated in honour of Apollo. The reaſon why I mention them, is to obſerve, that it was long before horſe-races and wreſtling came to be a part of the entertainment. The firſt and ſole actors for many years, were the Ῥαψῳδοὶ, or *Rhapſodiſts*; and their trial of ſkill was, who ſhould ſing the fineſt Pæan in preſence of that auguſt aſſembly. This cuſtom was eſtabliſhed before the Amphictyons met at Delphi: and though there were no other evidence of Homer's having been there, yet I could never bring myſelf to believe, that the ſweeteſt ſinger

in Greece would foolishly shun the place where the greatest honours were paid to his art.

It is plain he was fond of the character; was sensible to glory and public esteem; and as for his affection to the subject, the praise of Apollo, besides the first and longest of his hymns dedicated to that theme, there goes a second under his name, where he tells the God, "That a sweet-spoken bard, who "holds in his hand an harmonious lyre, makes "him always the first, and chuses him as the last "subject of his song[a]."

And here a new unbounded prospect opens full upon us: Homer at Delphi, conversing with the priests, singing pæans to Apollo, and celebrating the meeting of the muses and the graces! What advances might he not make in this great school of religion and poetry? The oracle was the standing fountain of their knowlege; the sacred spring that stood open for their instruction in (what they thought) piety and learning. Thither they came from every neighbouring coast, to learn the fates of kingdoms and commonwealths, and consult the success of their projects in private life. Let us think a little, how it was possible to draw such dependence? How to maintain it, in the midst, not only of a barbarous people, such as the Greeks ge-

[a] — Σὲ δ' Ἀοιδὸς ἔχων Φόρμιγγα λίγειαν
Ἡδυεπὴς, πρῶτόν τε καὶ ὕστατον ἀεὶν ἀείδει.
Ὅμηρ. Ὕμνος εἰς Ἀπόλλων. B.

nerally were at its ſettlement; but when things were much changed, when they had acquired that acuteneſs and penetration, for which they were famous ſome hundreds of years before the oracle ceaſed? Religious reputation, we know, is of a ticklish nature, hard to be ſupported in a learned inquiſitive nation; and when once blaſted, is irretrievable for ever. The difficulty increaſes, when we conſider how nicely the anſwers would be ſifted, and their ſenſe canvaſſed, with more curious eyes and anxious attention, than any thing in the world beſides: and after all, it ſeems, *They flocked to Delphi, and believed the oracle.*

As a ſort of apology for a thing incapable of defence, we muſt ſuppoſe that they firmly believed what many of them have left in writing, "That "many of the predictions were really accompliſh-"ed." Others, they perſuaded themſelves, would ſtill come to paſs: for they reaſoned, If ſome had, why not all? In the next place, it uſually appeared from the anſwer, That the God was perfectly acquainted with the country, parentage, and fortunes of his ſuppliant. He commonly addreſſed him with an appellation taken from the founder of his family, or from ſome illuſtrious place or perſon to whom he bore a relation. And indeed through all the oracles that have reached us, we diſcover a wide knowlege of the geography and antiquities of Greece; of their colonies, antient ſettlements, and the various turns in their affairs. Nor is that know-

lege confined to Greece; but Aſia, Afric, and the Weſtern parts, fall often under the cognizance of Apollo.

To account for this, without ſuppoſing a ſucceſſion of knowing men in the ſervice of the temple, and a ſtock of learning unknown to the reſt of Greece, would prove a difficult taſk: and the rather, that there could be no fallacy deviſed to ſupply the want of it. For the votaries, however prone to believe, and unwilling to reaſon, yet could never be deceived as to their own country and parentage. And in this reſpect the oracle acted in as fair a manner as could be wiſhed. It did not, like the Sibyls, utter prophecies at random, upon ſtrange hidden ſubjects, without rule or choice: but allowed you plainly to ſtate your queſtion, and then, in ſome connexion with it, emitted a prophecy, or gave the ſolution. There ſeems then to be a neceſſity, either to admit the knowlege of the prieſts, or turn converts to the antients, and believe in the omniſcience of Apollo, which, in this age, I know no-body in hazard of.

The truth is, ſuch a ſettlement could neither have been projected nor executed at that time, by any other than a wiſe people, ſkilled in the arts of government, both religious and civil, and not without ſome experience in naval affairs. Without this laſt, it was impoſſible to know the ſtate of Greece; the different nations that inhabited the ſeveral coaſts;

their cities, and product of the ſoil; the revolutions in their republics, and origins of their families. But a people ſkilled in navigation had good opportunities to know ſuch things; becauſe, as was already obſerved, the greater part of Greece lay upon the ſea[a]. Theſe qualifications are hard to be found together; and when found, they agree to no Greek nation then in being, but to the Cretans; the very men whom our poet names as the founders of the oracle. Let us take a view of this antient iſland; and, if poſſible, trace this oracular ſcience to its fountain.

It appears from hiſtory, that before the days of Minos, Crete lay under the common calamities of Greece: it was afflicted with incurſions, devaſtations, and frequent removes of its old inhabitants: but, from his time, it became a regular flouriſhing ſtate; and, by virtue of his laws, with the aſſiſtance of its ſituation, had the happineſs to preſerve its liberty long after the continent was enſlaved. From ſuch a thorough and ſudden change in their affairs, it is natural to infer, "That the Cretan "laws were not invented by degrees, like the Athe-"nian and Roman, or enacted piece-meal accord-"ing to the urgencies of the ſtate; but laid down "all at once; and reſembling, in this reſpect, the "Spartan or Venetian conſtitution." And when we conſider it in this light, we muſt allow ſuch a

[a] See page 52. note [b].

plan of government to be the effect of abſtracted knowlege, and of a juſt view of human nature, in its paſſions and relations to outward objects. But this could hardly come from a barbarian: it muſt be the child of a man who had either himſelf ſeen, or was ſoundly inſtructed in the arts of policy; who had known a legal civilized life, and could provide againſt the turns of manners ariſing in populous cities and rich communities, either from inward luxury or foreign violence.

That this was done by Minos with a depth of wiſdom peculiar to that lawgiver, is unanimouſly teſtified by the antients: but one witneſs may ſerve for all on this ſubject; for we may ſafely take Plato's word in what belongs to a legiſlature. He ſays two things of the Cretan laws: Firſt, "That it "was with great reaſon they were celebrated as the "moſt excellent in Greece:" And ſecondly, "That they were the moſt antient in that ſame "country." Let us keep them in view, while we conſider, at the ſame time, ſome particularities in the life of the lawgiver.

He is famous not only in this capacity, but as a founder of cities, Cnoſſus, Cydonia, and Phœſtus[a]; which are two qualities that rarely meet in one man. He appears to have been equally juſt in executing his laws, as he was wiſe in contriving them. His two brothers he made ſupreme judges in the

[a] Diodorus Siculus, lib. v.

kingdom, Talus, the younger, went a circuit thrice a year through the iſland, to hear cauſes and do juſtice: the laws by which he judged were engraven on plates of braſs; and from the conſtant uſe he made of them, he got the name of Χαλκυς, or the Brazen Talus. Rhadamanthus, the elder, had the cognizance of crimes, and held his tribunal in the metropolis [a]. The prince himſelf led his armies, and commanded likewiſe his fleets in perſon; and he is ſaid to be abſolutely the firſt who was lord of the ocean [b]. From this circumſtance in his life, and the power of life and death committed to his brother, they both ſeem to have had their names [c].

But the greateſt honour which this prince attained to, and what makes moſt for our preſent purpoſe, is, that of all the antient heroes, Minos alone is celebrated as the companion of Jove, with whom he uſed to converſe as with a friend [d]. From him, it is ſaid, he had his laws; and to account for this

[a] Plato in Minoe et Epinomide.

[b] *Hanc urbem, ante alios, qui tum florebat in armis,*
Fecerat infeſtam populator Remige Minos.
P. VIRGIL. CEIRIS.

[c] Rhadamanthus from *Rhada* dominari, and *Manoth* imagines, Umbrae, Phantaſmata: Or *Maveth* or *Moth*, Mors, Mortes: as if it were the *Lord* of the *ſhades*, or *Prince* of *death*. Minos from *Mi* or *Me*, Aquae, and *Non*, Filius, Princeps. From the old root *Mi* or *Mai*, by a common tranſpoſition, comes *Iam* the Sea.

[d] Homer calls him Διος Μεγαλυ Ουριους, which Horace tranſlates — *Jovis arcanis Minos admiſſus*, lib. i. ode 28.

familiarity, he was afterwards called his ſon. Now, if to theſe accounts of this founder of ſtates, we add another reflection; "That all the Gods were "ſaid to be born in Crete, that there Jupiter "was nurſed in a cave, and the Curetes, or Idæi "Dactyli, danced about him, leſt old Time ſhould "devour him, as he had done all the Gods that "had been worſhipped before:" This, I ſay, will carry us a ſtep further in the enquiry, and enable us to underſtand what Ephorus means, when he tells us, "That Minos was no Cretan, but came from "beyond ſea to Crete, with theſe tutors of Jove "juſt now mentioned [a]."

Here a light ſtrikes upon us, that ſeems to make ſome amends for the length of the deduction. The oracle of Apollo at Delphi was a ſettlement of Cretans: In Crete Jupiter, and the other Gods, were born; that is, "the Cretans were the firſt Euro-"peans who received a form of worſhip, and learn-"ed the names and natures of the Gods; and from "them that knowlege was propagated among the "weſtern nations." In this ſenſe, Jupiter and Juno, Ceres and Neptune, with all their train, were of Cretan extract as to the Greeks. The inhabitants of Crete, formerly barbarous, were inſtructed by Minos, who came with people already civilized and inſtructed in civil and manual arts, the Curetes, Idæi Dactyli, and the Telchines from

[a] Apud Diodor. lib. v.

Rhodes: which is to ſay in ſubſtance, "That the "knowlege of the Gods, their temples, prieſts, and "oracles, with the neceſſary ſubſervient arts, were "firſt brought to Crete, by Phrygians, Phenicians, "and Egyptians."

I cannot reſolve to lead your Lordſhip through the labyrinth of mythology and hiſtory, in which a farther inveſtigation would intangle us: though ſhould we purſue it, and trace backward the Delphic antiquities, firſt from Crete, then from Phenicia and Rhodes, and thence to Egypt, we have every where veſtiges that would direct us in the track. Many of them have been pointed out already by a great man [a], though with another deſign: but a hand, ſo maſterly as his, ſeldom touches a ſubject without ſpreading a luſtre over every thing that belongs to it.

Cadmus's relation to Egypt, his flight from Phenicia, and founding the Beotian Thebes, are things too notorious to be inſiſted on: neither is it worth while to mention many other facts of the ſame nature, which are to be found in every writer. But I incline to think, that the people laſt named, the Telchines, came immediately to Greece from that mother-land of prieſts and ſuperſtition.

The account Diodorus gives of them, is firſt, that they were children of the ſea; — or, in plainer terms, that they came from beyond ſea to Greece

[a] Sir Iſaac Newton, Chronolog. chap. i.

and the iſlands; whoſe rude inhabitants being able to give no other account of their origin, imagined them (as the Indians did the Spaniards) to be the off-ſpring of the element where they firſt appeared, and therefore called them the ſons of the ocean: for the ſame reaſon, they had given the ſame name to Inachus and his wife before: they were, for any thing we know, the firſt Egyptians who came to Peloponneſus, and founded the antient kingdom of Argos. Some ſaid, that Inachus was the God of the river, at whoſe mouth he had entered the country.

It is eaſy to imagine how prone an ignorant gazing race of mortals would be to entertain ſuch fancies: and how great the barbarity was that prevailed among them, is evident from the ſtory of Phoroneus the ſon of Inachus, and his ſucceſſor in the new-formed kingdom. He is ſaid to have firſt taught the wild inhabitants to quit the caves [a] and hollows of the mountains in which they lived [b], to

[a] ——— οὔτε πλινθουργεῖς, etc,
——— They neither knew
Tile-cover'd houſes ſtanding in the ſun,
Nor timber-work; but like the earth-bred ant,
They lived in ſunleſs caves dug under ground.
No certain ſign had they of winter's cold,
Nor of the flow'ry ſpring, or ſummer's ſtore;
But blindly managed all ——— ESCHYL. Prometh.

[b] *Genus et indocile, et diſperſum montibus altis.*
A ſtubborn race, on mountains living wild.
VIRG. Æneid. lib. viii.

build themſelves houſes, and make a ſort of town[a]. In his days came the Telchines, the ſecond Egyptian colony, and attempted to make a deſcent, and ſettle in the ſame place; but being repulſed by Phoroneus, they ſailed to Rhodes, and ſome of them paſſed over from thence to Crete[b]. In both places they are called the inventers of arts of every kind; as well they might appear to a people ſo void of contrivance, and deſtitute even of the neceſſaries of life[c]. They were the firſt of mankind who reared temples, and made images and ſtatues of Gods. Some of the ancienteſt ſtatues in Greece bore the Telchine name, and preſerved the memory of their authors: thus the Lindians called theirs, the Telchinian Apollo: the old Camirus had a Telchinian Juno: and in Ialyſſus, both Juno and the Nymphs were diſtinguiſhed by the ſame epithet[d].

[a] Pauſanias Corinth. lib. ii. Φορωνεα ἐν τῇ γῇ ταύτῃ, etc. 'This Phoroneus, the ſon of Inachus, firſt gathered mankind 'together into a community, who before his time were ſcat'tered up and down, and had each of them ſeparate dwell'ings; and the place in which they were firſt brought to live 'together, was called from him the Phoronean town.'

[b] Euſebius. Numb. 229.

[c] *Hanc variae gentes, antiquo more ſacrorum*, etc.
Concerning her, old ſuperſtition fram'd
A thouſand rites, and Idan-mother nam'd;
Then a large train of Phrygian prieſts aſſign'd,
Becauſe in Phrygia corn at firſt took birth,
And thence was ſcatter'd o'er the other earth.
CREECH's LUCRET.

Diodo. Sicul. lib. v.

Now, it is generally agreed among the beſt judges, that theſe are all Egyptian inventions; and the very things for which that thoughtful people valued themſelves above other nations. The great diſciple of their prieſts tells us [a], "That the names "of the twelve Gods were firſt ſettled by the E-"gyptians, and from them the Greeks had receiv-"ed them: that they were the people who had "raiſed altars, carved ſtatues, and beſtowed tem-"ples upon the Gods, and had firſt cut the figure "of a living creature in ſtone." After this, it is almoſt needleſs to add, that the Telchines paſſed for great conjurers and magicians; able to do wonders with charms and drugs, whoſe powers they knew, but were extremely reſerved and ſcrupulous in communicating their diſcoveries. Yet theſe are characteriſtics not only of their being Egyptians, but of the race or tribe of the prieſts, the old inventers of the Ἕρμα Γράμματα, the *holy characters*, and other methods of hiding their knowlege from the vulgar [b].

So far we are led by the laborious and learned Diodorus. From others we learn, "That the Cu-"retes, the Corybantes, the Telchines, and the "Idæi Dactyli, were all of one and the ſame

[a] Ἀνάθικά τι Θεῶν, etc. Ἡροδοτ. Εὐτέρπη. Βιβ. β.

[b] Τὰς δ' ἱερίας τῶν Αἰγυπτίων, etc. 'For this reaſon both 'the prieſts of Egypt, the Chaldeans of Babylon, and the Per-'ſian magi, antiently obtained honour and pre-eminence in 'their ſeveral nations, becauſe they excelled in ſome kinds 'of knowlege.' STRABO Geograph. book i.

" tribe, or with a very little variation: that they " were all enthuſiaſtic, much addicted to ſacred " ſhows, Bacchic proceſſions, and ecſtatic perfor- " mances: that in conſequence of this general cha- " racter, they choſe to appear as ſervants and mi- " niſters of the Gods; and amazed mankind with " the noiſe of cymbals, ſiſtrums, pipes, and the " appearance of the armed dance [a]." In a word, they were a people come from a land of prieſts, and fond of propagating their native arts; thoſe arts by which they could raiſe the greateſt admiration in mankind, and gain the moſt reverence to themſelves [b]."

[a] Strabo, lib. x. It is admirably told by the author: Τὸς ἀυτὸς δὲ τοῖς Κυρίσι, etc. 'The Corybantes, the Cabeiri, the Idean Dactyls, and the Telchines are ſaid to be the ſame people with the Curetes. Others ſpeak of them as being all allied to one another, and mark out ſmall differences between the ſacred tribes: but to take them in the groſs, and ſpeak of the greater part, they were all a kind of enthuſiaſtic Bacchanals, who, under the form of ſacred miniſters, in an armed proceſſion, accompanied with drums, cymbals, and the clangor of arms; and alſo with flutes and ſhouting, endeavoured to ſtrike an awe into mankind by the tumult and noiſe of their worſhip: it is ſaid further, that theſe rites of the Curetes in ſome meaſure co-incide with thoſe practiſed in Samothrace, and in Lemnos, and in ſeveral other places; for this reaſon, that the adminiſtrators of them were one and the ſame people. It is true, that this method of reaſoning upon theſe ſubjects properly belongs to theology; but neither it is foreign to the ſpeculations of a philoſopher.'

[b] *Tympana tenta tonant palmis, et cymbala circum*
Concava; rauciſonoque minantur cornua cantu, etc.

That they came from an eaſtern country is apparent from the order of their arrival, and the progreſs of their inventions through the weſtern parts of Europe. Arts, and wealth, and political inſtitutions in religion, for the greater part, go hand in hand, and can hardly be diſunited by any human precautions. They were inſeparable companions in the progreſſion of the Grecian manners formerly mentioned; and their real motions weſtward are accordingly to be gathered from thoſe paſſages of Homer's writings, where he ſpeaks of the countries then famous for wealth and grandeur. The firſt is Egypt; whoſe chief city, THEBES, bears the character of that place in the world

— Ὅθι Πλεῖστα Δόμοις ἐνὶ Κτήματα κεῖται [a],

" where the houſes contained the greateſt wealth :" next, the coaſt of Aſia, " whoſe inhabitants, ſays " the poet, the Ἑλκεχίτωνες Ἰάονες, *Ionians in their* " *flowing robes*, are a delightful ſight to a man who " beholds their fine appearance, when they come " to Delos, with their wives and children, ἠδ' ἀν- " τῶν Κτήματα Πολλὰ [b], and the great wealth they " poſſeſs :" and laſtly, the richeſt man in Greece,

> Amidſt their pomp, fierce drums and cymbals beat,
> And the hoarſe horns with rattling notes do threat,
> The pipe in Phrygian ſtrains diſturbs their ſouls,
> Till reaſon overthrown, mad paſſion rules;
> They brandiſh arms, thoſe dreadful ſigns of war,
> To raiſe in impious routs religious fear.
>
> CREECH's LUCRET.

[a] Ὀδυσ. δ. [b] Ὁμήρου Ὕμν. εἰς Ἀπολλωνα. α.

not in lands or cattle, but in houſhold furniture, plate, and apparel, is Menelaus, who

Κυπρον, Φοινικην τε, και Αιγυπτιους Επαλυθεις,
Had wander'd o'er Phenicia, Cyprus, Egypt[a],

and from theſe countries had brought home ſo much wealth, and ſo many works of art, as to make his palace ſhine with gold, amber, ſilver, and ivory; and left him without a rival in wealth among the Greeks.

Exactly agreeable to this, the iſlands ſaid to be firſt civilized, and brought to live in a regular manner, were Cyprus, Rhodes, and Crete. Your Lordſhip, who knows their ſituation, will eaſily perceive, that their neighbourhood to the continent muſt have procured them that precedency; and for the ſame reaſon, that Imbrus and Lemnos, lying ſo near the Cherſoneſus, became the grand receptacles of the Samothracian and Bendidian myſteries. Nine of the Telchines are ſaid to have lived in Rhodes; and ſome of them went from thence with Rhea, to aſſiſt her to nurſe Jove in Crete; that is, "In a courſe or flux of years, they went from "Rhodes, and inſtructed the Cretans in the wor"ſhip of Jupiter"

One of the chief parts of the worſhip of the antients, was their oracles[b]; and their believing in

[a] See Section xi. about the middle.

[b] Τοῖς ἀρχαίοις μᾶλλον, etc. 'All the branches of the art 'of prophecy were held in great eſteem among the antients,

them was a proof of their being truly convinced of their divine original: it is not therefore to be ſuppoſed that the Egyptian ſtrangers would neglect a principal branch of their religion, or overlook ſo gainful an inſtitution in their new plantation: but that there may be no uſe for ſuppoſition, nor any doubt left of the oracular talents of this very tribe, one of the Telchines, Lycus by name, leaving their firſt ſettlement went to Lycia[a], and founded the oracle of the Lycian Apollo, upon the banks of Xanthus. This temple, the accurate Strabo calls τὸ Λητῶον, the *temple of Latona*, which affords a new proof of its Egyptian origin. The chief oracle in Egypt was Latona's at Butoo, the mother of Apollo, (for the God was of a ſoothſaying family;) and the Telchine who founded this, has probably called it after the honoured habitation of the Goddeſs in his own country.

Delphi, I take to have been their next ſettlement, after they had ſucceeded ſo happily in Crete, and eſtabliſhed both their rites and laws among the inhabitants: from it, in a lineal kind of ſucceſſion, ſprung the oracles of the greateſt fame over Greece. Among the deſcendants of Machereus (a Delphic prieſt, famous for killing Neoptolemus) was Branchus; who quitted his paternal ſeat, went to Di-

and particularly their Oracles: but now they are almoſt wholly neglected.' STRABO, book 17.

[a] See page 93. of Olen the Lycian.

dymæ near Melitus, and there ſet up the oracle of Apollo, known by the name of Branchidæ. The prieſts of the temple affirmed in the uſual mythological ſtrain, that Apollo was in love with their founder, and ſo beſtowed upon him the gift of prophecy.

A little before this, the Clarian oracle near Colophon was founded by Mopſus the ſon of the inſpired Manto, and grandſon of Tireſias the Theban prophet. It ſtood in a beautiful grove, as did moſt of the temples that were conſecrated to Apollo and Diana, and was ſtill in vogue in the days of Germanicus the ſon of Druſus, and Livia's grandchild. There were many of them all along the Ionic coaſt, which ſeems to have been antiently a prophetic ſoil: it came afterwards to be productive of poetry, and turned at laſt to rhetoric and philoſophy. Apollo had oracles at Zeleia, Priapus, Lariſſa, Thymbrus, Cilla, Grynium, and many other places. The multitude of them ſhews a particular attachment to his worſhip; and the reaſon of it is worthy of our notice, and belongs to our ſubject.

The little iſland Delos is commonly aſſigned, by the Greek hiſtorians, as the birth-place of Apollo and Diana: but the Aſiatics have likewiſe a claim, and perhaps equally antient with the other. "A "little up from the ſea-ſhore, not far from Ephe"ſus, there ſtands a ſtately grove of all ſorts of "wood, but chiefly Cypreſs: they call it Ortygia,

" and through it runs the river Cenchrius, in which " they ſay the Goddeſs Latona bathed herſelf after " child-bearing. For here it was that her delivery " happened under the care of Ortygia the nurſe; " and here they ſhew the receſs or ſanctuary in " which ſhe was brought to bed, and the olive " tree on which ſhe firſt leaned, when her pangs " had ceaſed. Above the grove ſtands Solmiſſus, " the mount where the Curetes took their ſtation, " and with the noiſe of their armour amazed the " jealous Juno, until Latona was brought to bed. " Many old temples are to be ſeen around the place, " and ſome new built: that firſt are adorned with " antient ſtatues; ſuch as a ſtatue of Latona with a " ſceptre in her hand, and another of Ortygia with " the twin-gods in her arms. A grand aſſembly is " yearly held in honour of the birth; the youth from " the adjacent parts appear ſumptuouſly habited, " and keep the feaſt with all poſſible magnificence; " and the antient college of the Curetes make an " entertainment for themſelves, and perform ſome " myſtic ſacrifices, I ſuppoſe after the manner of " their founders[a]."

Here we have the ſame rites, and the ſame teachers of them, as we found in Crete, the parent of the Delphic oracle: and it could hardly fall out otherwiſe, ſince the ſame hiſtorian who pointed out the country of Minos[b], hath alſo told us, " That

[a] Strabo, lib. xiv. [b] Ephorus apud Strabon. lib. xiv.

" the Cretans under Sarpedon, ſailed to this very " coaſt, and founded the old Melitus: the new " was hard by it; which afterwards ſent forth co- " lonies all round it, and on both ſides the Helle- " ſpont, as far as the Euxine ſea."

We have the very ſame account from Virgil, who is admired and quoted by the later Roman writers, not only as the fineſt poet, but the greateſt and exacteſt antiquarian of his country; which, they ſay, he has ſhewed wherever the ſtructure of his poem did not forbid it. He lets us know, that the antient inhabitants of the Trojan coaſt came from this parent-iſland under Teucrus, and, as all colonies do, transferred the names of their old towns and mountains into their new ſettlements. Miletus, or Milytus, was a town in Crete, and Miletus one in Aſia founded by Sarpedon: Ida was a mountain in Crete, and another of the ſame name overlooked Troy: the Dorians, Curetes, and Pelaſgi were Cretans, (ſee Odyſſ. xix.) and the Dorians, Curetes, and Pelaſgi were inhabitants of the leſſer Aſia; and alſo brought with them the whole train of their proceſſional rites, and oracular worſhip [a].

[a] Creta Jovis magni medio jacet inſula ponto,
Mons Idaeus ubi, et gentis cunabula noſtrae.
Centum urbes habitant magnas, uberrima regna
Maximus unde pater, (ſi rite audita recordor)
Teucrus, Rhoeteas primum eſt advectus ad oras;
Optavitque locum regno: nondum Ilium et arces

With the Cretans came likewiſe theſe guardians of young Deities, the Curetes[a], to the maritime places of Ionia, Caria, and Lycia, and made Apollo be born here, as they had made Jove be produced in Crete; or, perhaps, as they or ſome of their order had made Apollo himſelf owe his birth to Delos before.

That the Grecians were themſelves conſcious of this genealogy of their God, I gather from the hymns aſcribed to Orpheus; which, though not the work of the great law-giver, as they now ſtand, are yet the nobleſt and oldeſt remain of the pure Grecian liturgy. They are properly invocations of the ſeveral deities, and compoſed of the diſtinctions, powers, and attributes peculiar to each: the Tuſcan prieſts very juſtly called theſe pieces of worſhip Indigitamenta. In the addreſs to Apollo, among the other qualities, taken from his nature, as repreſenting the ſun; from his mythology, as vanquiſhing Python; and from his effects, as health and harmony, there is one taken from a local relation: he calls him Μεμφιτης, or the *Memphian Apollo*; an appellation taken from Memphis, the metropolis of Egypt, at the time when theſe hymns were com-

Pergameae ſteterant; habitabant vallibus imis.
Hinc mater cultrix Cybele Corybantiaque aera
Idaeumque nemus: hinc fida ſilentia ſacris,
Et juncti currum dominae ſubiere leones.

VIRG. Æneid. lib. iii.

[a] Et tandem antiquis Cretum allabimur oris.

VIRG. Æneid. iii.

posed[a]. It is remarkable as it stands among the other epithets; and appearing among the first of them, seems to insinuate an early affinity between the Delphic and Egyptian prophecy. In the same hymns, the Curetes are complimented with being

——————— *Th' immortal race*
Who first prescrib'd a prayer to weak mankind[b].

And in the address to Latona, it is plain the author knew the pretensions of Asia to her reception; but he has divided the honour, and made her bear Apollo in Delos, and Diana in Ortygia[c].

There is another connexion still remains: to comprehend it in all its strength and beauty, requires an eye like your Lordship's, accustomed to view the various models of states, and trace the genius and result of different schemes of government. I can only pretend to point out the substance of it, which stands thus.

It is agreed among the antients, that the plan of the Spartan constitution was taken from the laws

[a] The hymn begins,
Ἐλθὲ μάκαρ Παιαν, τιτυοκτόνε, Φοῖβε, λυκορεῦ,
Μεμφιτ', ἀγλαότιμε, ἰήϊε, ὀλβιοδῶτα, etc.
'Come, happy Paean, the God who killed Tityus; thou who 'observest the seasons like the wolves; a native of Memphis; 'glorious in honour; God of the bow; giver of good 'things! ———

[b] Ἀθάνατοι Κυρητες, ἀρήϊα τεύχε' ἐχόντες, etc.

[c] Γειναμένη Φοῖβον, etc. 'Thou broughtest forth Phoebus, 'and the dart loving Diana; — the God among the Delian 'rocks, and the Goddess in Ortygia.'

of Crete. Lycurgus, they ſay, made ſome ſtay in the iſland, and converſed with the Cretan Thales, a lawgiver and poet, who informed him, "How "Minos and Radamanthus had framed their laws, "and publiſhed them among the inhabitants as "coming from Jove." From thence he went to Delphi, and conſulted the oracle concerning the plan he had received; and it being approved of, he returned to Lacedemon, and ſettled it likewiſe as the dictates, not of Jupiter, but of the Delphian God. It was ſtill in vigour when Herodotus lived; who having had occaſion to obſerve the Spartan and Egyptian cuſtoms, with more attention and underſtanding than falls to the ſhare of ſome travellers, hath left us a draught of the reſemblance he found in many particulars, both of their religion and government [a]. I will not enter into the detail of them, but take notice of an obvious queſtion; "How "great the reſemblance muſt have been between "the original (the Egyptian and Cretan) ſince ſo "much of it was preſerved in the copy at ſecond "hand, the Lacedemonian conſtitution?"

Of all the inſtitutions of Crete, I ſhall mention but one, to ſhew the diffuſive influence of Egyptian cuſtoms. Muſic and poetry in Egypt were circumſcribed by law, as I obſerved before; and we learn from the ſketch of the Cretan commonwealth left by Strabo, "That their children were

[a] Herodot. Erat. lib. vi.

" taught letters, and the ſongs appointed by law, " and a certain ſpecies of muſic, excluſive of all o- " thers[a]." In imitation of this, the Lacedemonian youth ſung the hymns of Terpander; and to give them the more authority, the Helotes or ſlaves were forbid to ſing them under ſevere penalties. Thus theſe three ſtates, Egypt, Crete, and Lacedemon agreed in the ſtrange deſign of ſetting boundaries to the two wildeſt things in life, the ſallies of muſic and raptures of poetry. But this, we are told[b], was the moſt antient philoſophy in Greece; and their firſt Sophiſts, taught by the Egyptians, run their ſcience in this politic ſtrain. They choſe, like their maſters, to begin at the ſource; and thought it the greateſt wiſdom to faſhion and regulate the human paſſions, by adjuſting the ſprings that ſet them a going.

And now we are to get upon an aſcent, whence we can ſee to the end of the diſquiſition. It now appears what theſe Pæans were, which the Cretans were wont to ſing: —— No other than the public hymns authorized by law, and appointed to be learned by their noble youth. It appears in what manner the oracle was erected, and what kind of learning was probably there: —— It muſt have

[a] Παῖδας δὲ γράμματα, etc. Lib. 1.

[b] Φιλοσοφία ἐστι παλαιοτάτη, etc. 'The oldeſt philoſophy 'in Greece, and moſt generally profeſſed, was in the iſland 'Crete, and the city Lacedemon; and the greateſt number 'of wiſe men the world can ſhew, are to be found there.' PLATO.

been a tradition of the Cretan and Egyptian mythology, involved in metaphor, and heightened by enthusiasm. Nor was it solely confined to religious matters: all sorts of subjects came through the hands of Apollo; and the philosopher so often quoted, when he forms a scheme for improving his countrymen in wisdom, and assisting them to make advances in real knowlege, lays a part of the stress upon their instruction from the oracle [a].

Thither our poet seems to have gone by sea from Chios. For in relating the voyage of the Cretan vessel that carried the founders of the temple of Delphi, almost round the Peloponnesus, he has described the coast so minutely as to name eighteen promontories and coast-towns, which they saw one after another: he mentions the distant islands, and tops of mountains, they descried at such and such parts of their navigation; and has not forgot so much as the changes of the wind necessary in so indirect a course. This seems to be too exact and particular to be received by relation from another; but looks like the effect of personal observation, and the exact memory our poet retained of a voyage made by himself. There let us leave him with his priestly instructors, to consider what use he made of this

[a] Παιδείαις τε ἢ ἐκ Δελφῶν, etc. 'Taking always in the instruction from the oracles, and the prophecies they may receive from Delphi.' PLATO.

ſtock of knowlege, and how ſuch materials are to be managed?

So delicate is the nature of mythology, that it requires not a ſtronger head, or more elevated fancy, to produce it at firſt, than it does a nice hand to apply it in a poem, and interweave it with the perſons and machines concerned in the action. Of two ſorts already mentioned, the laſt is apt to get the upper-hand in the narration, and confound its own offspring, the artificial mythology. This produces inconſiſtencies ſometimes in facts, or renders the meaning of the allegory impenetrable: but the worſt part of its influence, when miſapplied, is upon manners; where it deſtroys the diſtinctions of characters, and often blends extremes that are incompatible in nature.

There are circumſtances in many of Homer's ſtories, which have little connexion with the tranſaction where they are employed: "Some of his "fables, ſays Euſtathius, were invented by him-"ſelf for his preſent purpoſe; others of them are "purely allegorical: and he has many beſides, "that were compoſed at firſt by the antients, and "are inſerted in their proper places in his poetry, "though their allegory does not always reſpect the "Trojan affairs, but points at what was intended "by its firſt inventers."

To ſhew the truth and extent of theſe obſervations throughout Homer's writings, would be, up-

on the matter; to write a regular treatiſe of mythology. It has been done in part by the learned Proclus in his notes upon Heſiod, and upon Plato's Timæus; where the objections raiſed againſt our poet's repreſentations of the Gods are anſwered, ſometimes with more deference than judgment. But there are ſome other parts of his management with reſpect to his divinities; their ranging themſelves on different ſides; and his chiefs being protected by oppoſite powers, which it will be worth while to examine. They are beauties in poetry for the moſt part but little obſerved, and give great pleaſure, when we enter into their meaning, and perceive the juſtneſs of their application.

Homer's Gods are finely diſtributed between the two armies, the Greeks and Barbarians: the Greeks, naturally wiſe and brave, and ſo formed by the temperature of their climate, have Pallas and Juno of their party. The Trojans have Mars, or the impetuous rage of war, Venus or effeminacy, and Apollo, a mixed kind of divinity; the God of heat, ecſtatic muſic, and poetic paſſion. Jupiter, or the univerſal nature, and particularly the influences of the celeſtial region, favours ſometimes the one, and ſometmes the other, but generally the Greeks. Neptune is entirely Grecian, as they were lords of the ſea. Mercury and Diana have little to do in the war, but are mentioned by the poet, the one from the Egyptian tradition as Latona's oppoſite, and the conductor of de-

parted ſouls; and the other, as a power, no friend to the ladies, whom ſhe kills at pleaſure. Theſe are what we may call the active Gods, and this is their general arrangement. As for Saturn or time, Ceres or the earth, Pluto or hell, they are a kind of ſtable deities that ſupport the whole of things, but have but little particular influence upon any ſingle action.

If we condeſcend to their ſeveral parts, and look nearer ſtill into the poet's conduct, we ſhall find every God in his becoming employment, and acting conſiſtently with the power he repreſents. Phœbus or the ſun, the God of heat and health, in his wrath ſends a plague. Achilles, from a ſenſation of the corruption of the air now unwholſome, or in the poet's ſtile, being warned by Juno, calls an aſſembly: provoked by Agamemnon, Pallas, or Reflexion, reaſons with him, and quiets him. His armour is made by Vulcan, the God of fire; and his vaſt nimbleneſs and humidity makes him properly the ſon of a Sea-Goddeſs. The wiſe and patient Ulyſſes is favoured by Minerva; as Ajax, raſh, lumpiſh, and ſtrong, is at conſtant variance with the Goddeſs of wiſdom: and it is very remarkable, that Homer never changes this tutelar Numen to the prince of Ithaca, nor repreſents his ſubtil hero under any other tuition than the blue ey'd maid's. It might have embelliſhed his narration, and given play to his fancy; but he has preferred the truth

of the character, and ſtuck cloſe to his allegory. The frequent ſhipwrecks, and the bad fortune of the hero at ſea, is, in poetical language, that he was hated by Neptune; in the ſame manner as the man who committed any outrage when drunk, was under the diſpleaſure of Bacchus. The other chiefs mentioned in the Iliad are frequently aſſiſted or protected by ſome divine perſon, according to the nature of the occaſion, the character of their nation, or their perſonal qualities.

Let us now quit our bard for a little, and obſerve what figure this ſubject makes in other hands. —— The celebrated Roman poet, writing for the honour of his country, has been forced to ſhift ſides, and make the Trojans, if not the conquering party, at leaſt worthy to conquer, and only ſubdued by fraud and ſtratagem. This, with the received tradition concerning the birth of his hero, has led him into ſome improprieties about his Gods, which he has not failed to cover with his uſual judgment. For example, that the chief Divinity who guides the holy, wiſe, and brave Eneas, ſhould be Venus, is ſomething unlucky. She well might tutor Paris, and favour all the Trojans, who had their ſeraglios even then: but it required great diſcretion to make her act in the Eneid with any propriety. And after all, however we may be charmed with the delicacy of her appearance, and the pomp of the deſcription, I do not know

but ſhe is introduced as a mere perſon, divine indeed, and of great power; but without any regard to her character and inclinations. It was hard to make her appear in a virtuous cauſe, or direct the enterprizes of the pious hero, in any other capacity than his traditional parent; except ſhe had condeſcended to accompany him when he went a hunting, and conducted him into the cave with Dido.

Such is the impatient temper of mythology; and ſo powerful a thing is truth, that it will not ſtoop to any other than a genuine repreſentation, nor bear to be disfigured though in maſque. Perhaps Homer's drawing immediately from the fountains, or having a hand himſelf of modelling theſe divine phantoms, was the cauſe of his having been ſo happy and natural in their diſtribution. Their uſe, if we may believe the antients, was not confined to poetry; nor to raiſing thoſe high ſenſations and magnificent images of the univerſe and of it parts, for which we admire them: but through the channel of religion they reached life, had an influence upon morals, and impreſſed the vulgar with that dread of future puniſhments, which keeps them in their duty.

A perſon of great wit, and great learning, who has laboured exceedingly to prove, "That mankind "for the moſt part acts not from principle," hath at the ſame time eſſayed to weaken this influence[a].

[a] Continuation de Penſées diverſes par M. Bayle, tom. 2. §. 119.

and attributes any good their religion and its rites could do, to their filling up that time which must have been otherwise ill employed by a polite and voluptuous people: yet he allows, that an apprehension of punishment from the magistrate restrains from evil; and why an apprehension of vengeance from the Gods, if supposed equally certain, should not have the same effect, I cannot understand: the former is insufficient, in many instances, to prevent fraud or violence, and so no doubt is the latter. And these instances, when collected and set together, make a glaring appearance; but conclude no more against the efficacy of religion, than against the necessity of laws and penalties to inforce them.

That the commonalty of Greece and Rome believed a state of future rewards and punishments; and that this belief kept them in their duty, is affirmed, as I said, by the wisest of the ancients. It is needless to tell your Lordship, that Timæus Locrus was of the number: the character he bears of Plato's master is sufficient to justify his claim. The little treatise of his, which it is thought his illustrious scholar purchased at an immense price, is no less than a *System of the world*[a]. His expressions are simple, but his doctrines are drawn from deep observation, and explained in the harmony and pro-

[a] Τιμαιο τυ Λοκρυ, etc. 'The book of Timæus the Locrian, concerning the soul of the world, and of nature.' On this treatise, these verses of Timon the satyrist are preserved:

portions of the Pythagoric philoſophy. He begins with creation, which he attributes to a good principle, whom he calls, "The inviſible God, the "prince and parent of all things." Then he goes through its parts; the nature of the elements, the courſe of the planets, and the periods of the world, and concludes with man, and the doctrine of morals, in theſe remarkable words: "The mind, ſays he, "that is exerciſed in ſuch contemplations, and at- "tains to a contentedneſs in the ſtate of humanity, "and to a juſt uſe of the appointed meaſure of life, "is undoubtedly happy: and whoſoever receives "this attainment as his lot from heaven, is led by "truth to felicity. But if any diſpoſition happens "to be perverſe and unruly, then chaſtiſement "ought to be applied; both that which is appoint- "ed by the laws, and alſo what can be drawn from "thoſe traditions which introduce numberleſs ter- "rors from heaven, and tortures in hell; threaten- "ing endleſs puniſhments that await the wretched "ghoſt below, with all the torments which the "Ionic poet has laudably, and from antient tradi- "tion, repreſented the ſouls of wicked men to en- "dure hereafter. For, as ſometimes, when whole- "ſome remedies will not prevail, we procure health

Πολλῶν δ' ἀργυρίων ὀλίγου ἐκτήσατο βίβλον, etc.
A little book with a vaſt ſum he bought;
Whence catching, fly, the hint, he undertook
To write his fam'd Timæus; and explain
How this wide world was made.——

" by a sickening potion; so we curb the stubborn " and disobedient by false relations, when the true " have no effect. Of necessity therefore the fo- " reign torments must be inculcated [a]. —— And " it must be told, that Nemesis, the distribu- " tive and avenging power, hath appointed all " these things to happen in the second period, " and to be executed by the fierce infernal Genii, " who witnessed the conduct and the crimes of " men. To them the all-governing God hath " committed the administration of the world, which " consists of Gods and men, and the other animals " he himself hath formed, after the perfect model " of the eternal and intellectual idea [b]."

It appears then that mythology, and Homer's mythology in particular, was thought to be a cure for a wrong-turned mind, and a restraint from immorality and vice: and if it was so in Greece, it was much more so in Italy, where Timæus was born, and where long after his days, not only private superstition prevailed, but the most important steps of the state were over-ruled by the aruspices and augurs; and their consuls and pretors bowed before a presage taken from the entrails of beasts, the flight of birds, and signs from heaven.

But Timæus's disciple seems to have carried things a little further: he lived in Athens at a time when

[a] Λέγοιντο δ' ἀναγκαίως ϗ Τιμωριαι Ξεναι.
[b] Ὅις ὁ πάντων Ἀγεμὼν Θεὸς, etc.

Τιμαίος Λοκρ. περι Ψυχ. Κόγμω.

the laws had given a ſanction to mythology; with which, like a good citizen, he ſo far complies, as to diſapprove of a narrow ſcrutiny into its ſenſe and origin. He thinks it beſt to accept of the literal meaning, and would have curious inquiſitive people rather turn their ſearches another way.

There was a beautiful ſpot of ground a little without the walls of Athens, upon the banks of Iliſſus, where it was believed that Boreas had run off with the nymph Orithya, while ſhe was ſporting with one of her companions upon the brink of the river. Thither came Socrates with a young gentleman of the town, in queſt of an agreeable retirement. They were to read a paradoxical diſcourſe of Lyſias, the greateſt orator then in Athens, proving, "That "favours in love ſhould rather be granted to thoſe "who never felt the paſſion, than to the real lover." And having talked a little of the beauty of the place, how proper it was for girls to ſport in, and mentioned ſome other circumſtances of the ſtory, the youth very naturally turns to his ſmiling companion, and ſays, "But be ſincere with me, Socra-"tes; Do you really believe this Legend to be "true [a]? — Why, ſays the philoſopher, though I "did not, (as they ſay your learned people do) I "ſhould not be far in the wrong; and then I would "go allegorize, and ſay, that the real wind had

a Ἀλλ' εἰπὲ μοὶ πρὸς Διὸς, ὦ Σωκρατες, ᾗ σὺ τῦτο τὸ Μυθολογημα πείθῃ ἀληθες εἶναι. Πλατ. Φαιδρός.

" come in a guſt, and blown the nymph off
" the ſteep, and ſo was reported to have car-
" ried her away, while ſhe and Pharmacia were
" intent upon their play. But for my own ſhare,
" my boy, I look indeed upon theſe moral mean-
" ings as very pretty and curious; but think they
" belong to a profound laborious genius, and are
" the work of not a very happy man. My reaſon
" is, (and I have no other for it) that after one
" has got through this allegory, he muſt next un-
" dertake the race of the Hippocentaurs; and
" when he hath adjuſted them, then the Chimæra
" comes upon him: next follows a train of Gor-
" gons and Pegaſus's, and other unwieldy monſters
" inexplicable both for their number and abſurdi-
" ty. Theſe, ſhould one go about to explain
" without believing them, and attempt to give,
" according to their texture and likeneſs, but a
" homely ſolution of their meaning, it would be
" an undertaking of great pains and leiſure. But
" I, my friend, can find no leiſure for ſuch enqui-
" ries; and the reaſon of it is, that I cannot as
" yet, in obedience to the God of Delphi, under-
" ſtand myſelf. Now, it appears ridiculous to me,
" to be ſearching into other matters while I am ig-
" norant of this. Wherefore bidding theſe ſub-
" jects adieu; and being perſuaded of the truth of
" the opinion ſettled concerning them by law, (as I
" juſt now told you) I fix my attention upon my-

" ſelf; and conſider, not the gorgon or the cen-
" taur, but what kind of a monſter I am; whe-
" ther more double and ſlippery than Proteus, and
" more fiery than Typhon: or perhaps, a tamer,
" milder animal, deſigned by nature for a divine
" lot, and a peaceful deſtiny."

SECT. XI.

THERE are few things in the antient poetry more moving than the ſtory of Orpheus and Eurydice. It hath acquired new beauties by falling into the hands of the tender and paſſionate Virgil; and is told by him in ſo melting a ſtrain, that ſome of the touches he hath given it can hardly be read without tears. When we are wrought up to ſuch a temper, it naturally leads us to compaſſionate the hard fate of the unhappy lovers; and we begin to feel ſome indignation at the captious condition, upon which he was to poſſeſs his beauty, or loſe her for ever: not to look at his loved Eurydice. Arbitrary and capricious! unbefitting the juſt brother of Jove, and unlike the bounties of a divine, unenvious na-

nature[a]: unleſs indeed there be ſomething elſe underſtood than appears; ſome truth in life or morals that lies latent under this circumſtance of the tale.

The great and unhappy lord Verulam, who was ſenſible of the incongruity, has given an explication of the fable[b]; but ſeems not to have hit upon the real meaning. What he ſays is entertaining and beautiful: for he was a ſpirit of that high order that go ingeniouſly wrong, and who cannot err without inſtructing. But I incline to think that the moral of the fiction is rather to be learned at an ordinary muſic-meeting, or an unmeaning opera, than where his Lordſhip directs us, in the receſſes of an abſtruſe philoſophy.

Orpheus's miſtreſs was muſic. The powers of it are enchanting. It lulls the reaſon, and raiſes the fancy in ſo agreeable a manner, that we forget ourſelves while it laſts: the mind turns diſſolute and gay; and hugs itſelf in all the deluding proſpects and fond wiſhes of a golden dream. Whilſt every accent is warbled over by a charming voice, a ſilly ſong appears ſound morality; and the very

[a] Ἄρρηνοι Οὐρανίδαι, καὶ ἐν ἀλλήλοις τελέθουσιν, etc.
Th' immortals 'mong themſelves no envy know;
The moon ne'er envies Phoebus' brighter ray,
Nor earth heaven's height, though plac'd ſo far below;
Nor e'er repine the rivers at the ſea:
All ſtedfaſt concord keep.——

[b] F. Bacon, *De Sapientia Veterum*, §. 11.

words of the opera paſs for ſenſe, in preſence of their Accompagnamento. But no ſooner does the muſic ceaſe, than the charm is undone, and the fancies diſappear. The firſt ſober look we take of it breaks the ſpell; and we are hurried back, with ſome regret, to the common dull road of life, when the florid illuſion is vaniſhed.

In this gloomy temper, my Lord, ſhould I be at preſent, had it been my happineſs to make one of the inſpired train: how unwillingly would a true ſon of the muſes part with his fictions and enthuſiaſm! the myſterious Egypt! the prophetic Iſis! the oracular Telchines! theſe nurſing fathers of the Grecian Divinities! To bid farewel to theſe with their divine pupils, and travel back with Homer, to the countries of a cooler turn, would be a melancholy proſpect to a poet.

But as things are at this time, I find it poſſible to be very chearful under the thoughts of an exchange: variety, they ſay, is ſweet; and there is a kind of pleaſure in getting rid of the lymphatic enthuſiaſtic tribe, and taking journey with our poet, to a land of freedom and ingenuity: a land of arts of a different ſtamp; not ſo preciſe and uniform as the prieſtly preſcriptions: but blooming in the native grace and vigour which is the gift of liberty and unlimited commerce. Nor will the change, I am perſuaded, be diſagreeable to your Lordſhip, ſince it leads to a people and nation whoſe memory you are bound to honour.

The Phenician name is ſo famous in early antiquity, that the bare mention of it is ſufficient to point out the ſource of your obligations. It preſents us with the authors and improvers of building, and the nobler kinds of architecture; with the firſt works in iron, wood, and ſtone: it makes us think of a country, the parent of mechanics, navigation, and aſtronomy; the inventers of glaſs, and rivals of Egypt for the invention of letters and arithmetic: in ſhort it reminds us of the origin of the noble and uſeful arts which employ many of your Lordſhip's hours, and enable you to judge for your country, in a capacity not very common among the great.

This happineſs of Phenicia in the inventive genius of its inhabitants, and its ſituation between Judæa and the ſea, have made me often wonder at the obſervation of an antient hiſtorian. He is treating of the riſe of arts, and what every nation had found out for the common benefit of mankind; and concludes his account with this remark, *Soli omnium Judæi nihil in medium contulere.* "The Jews "alone of all the reſt have contributed nothing for "the public good."

I have frequently endeavoured to find a reaſon for this diſſimilitude between two neighbours; ſometimes I have thought, that the knowlege of human arts cultivated in Phenicia, was perhaps incompatible with that ſacred ſcience, for which the

other people are so justly regarded: "Being the "only canton of the earth whose inhabitants were "surprizingly illuminated, beyond the rest of the "human race[a]." At other times I have imagined, that our author was mistaken in his remark; and he must have been so in the grossest manner, according to the doctrine of the Rabbi's. One of the wisest of them [b] makes no scruple to assert, "That the sublime and profound parts of all kinds "of knowlege were to be found among the Jews; "and that not only the principles of all the scien-"ces, but likewise the conclusions which the Greek "philosophers, Pythagoras, Plato, and such others, "had drawn from them, were transmitted to them "from the Jewish sages, through the hands, first "of the Chaldeans, and then of the Medes and "Persians." Which of these may have been the "case; or whether the necessity of invention in "naval affairs may not have produced some diffe-"rence between the bordering nations, your Lord-

[a] *On est surpris de voir*, etc. 'One is surprized to find the 'inhabitants of a small corner of the earth, such as Judea, 'more enlightened than all the rest of the human race.'

LEIBN. Pref. à la Theodicée.

[b] *En nuestra ley se comprehende*, etc. 'In our law is com-'prehended all the subtil and profound of the sciences; 'which is not so in the books of other religions.'—And a little afterwards, 'The foundations of all the sciences, and 'all the conclusions made from them, were transferred from 'us (Jews) first to the Chaldeans, then to the Persians and 'Medes, and afterwards to the Greeks.'

R. Yeuda. Cuzary, Disc. 2.

naval affairs may not have produced some difference between the bordering nations, your Lordship's acquaintance with the nature of those arts, and the history of men, will best enable you to decide. But our present business is only with the Phenicians.

They were a very antient nation; so antient, that though they are among the first countries who make any figure in history, and that letters were early in use among them, yet their origin is quite uncertain; and in this respect they are upon a level with their neighbours the Egyptians, or the antient Athenians, who both called themselves Αυτοχθονας [a], and the *first of men* [b]. Some of the old writers said, that they came from about the Arabian Gulph, and settled upon the Mediterranean coast: and others affirmed quite the contrary; "That some merchants "of Sidon had gone from thence, and first set on "foot a traffic in the Red-sea [c]." However this may have been, we cannot doubt of their retaining

[a] Sprung from the earth where they lived.

[b] Φασὶ τοίνυν Αἰγύπτιοι, etc. 'The Egyptians affirm, 'that in the beginning, when the world was created, the first 'man was produced in Egypt.' DIODOR. SIC. lib. 1.

[c] Οἱ μὲν γὰρ καὶ τὰς Φοινικας, etc. 'Some authors say that 'the Phenicians and Sidonians, known to us, are a colony of 'those who live upon the ocean; adding likewise, as a confirmation, the reason why they are called Phenicians; because the sea from whence they came, is the Red sea, (and Phenician signifies a red man.) Others again say that 'these latter Phenicians, upon the Red sea, are a colony from 'ours.' STRABO, lib. 1.

much of the manners of the eaſtern nations: their language was a branch of the Aramean, and their policy both civil and religious; their temples, records, and order of prieſts, exempted from taxes, are very like the inſtitutions that prevailed over the eaſt [a].

But what diſtinguiſhed them from all the reſt, was their early application to maritime affairs, and the noble uſe they made of their ſucceſs. They were invited to turn their thoughts this way by the commodiouſneſs of their ſituation; and purſued it with ſuch ſkilful indefatigable patience, that they were the firſt inventers, and continued the ſole maſters, of the weſtern trade, from the firſt Hercules to the time of Alexander, for many hundred of years. By this means, their acceſſions of wealth and people were ſo great, that they grew uneaſy at home, and therefore ſpread themſelves abroad in great colonies, and filled Spain and Afric with cities, little inferior in power and ſplendour to their own [b].

[a] Τύς τε ἱερῦς, etc. 'They had inſtituted their order of 'prieſts almoſt in the ſame manner as they are ſettled in 'Egypt; making them free from taxes, giving them immu'nity from all public ſervices, and putting them on the ſame 'footing with thoſe the people of Babylon call Chaldeans.' DIODOR. lib. 1.

[b] Barcinone (Barcelona) Malaca (Malaga), Carteia, (Carthagena,) with ſeveral others in Spain. In Afric, Tunis, Tripoli, Leptis, Utica, and the rival of Rome, Carthage: Thebes alſo in Beotia. But their great early ſettlement was in Gades [Cadix] the little iſland that lies in the mouth of the Streights

They were buſied about theſe ſettlements for ſome time after the Trojan war[a]: that is, "While "the Phenicians were in a ſtate of high proſperity, "populous and powerful, acquainted with foreign "countries and uſeful arts, then it was, by a "ſtrange conſtancy of good fortune, that Homer "had opportunities to know and converſe with "them."

I muſt acknowlege that ſuch a combination of lucky incidents in the life of any one man looks ſomething ſuſpicious; and when I review the concourſe of them; his climate and country, his religion and language, the public and private manners of his age, and his own profeſſion and travels, it ſerves but to increaſe the wonder. But we muſt conſider, that a thing being rare, does not preſently conclude it to be falſe or imaginary; elſe the moſt beautiful theories in learning, and the higheſt pitches of happineſs in life, muſt be given up as abſurd and impoſſible. Our buſineſs therefore is to tread cautiouſly, as we have done hitherto, and to take

and commanded all the weſtern trade of the world. This we can gather even from the divine prophet, who calls the people of Cadix, *the inhabitants of the Iſle, whom the merchants of Sidon, that paſs over the ſea, have repleniſhed.* Iſa. xxiii. 2.

[a] Θρυλλῶνται δ' οἱ Φοίνικες, etc. 'The navigation of the 'Phenicians is very much talked of: they paſſed the pillars 'of Hercules (the Streights of Gibraltar) and there they 'founded cities; others they likewiſe founded about the mid-'dle of the coaſt of Afric (Carthage, Utica, Hippo, etc.) a 'little after the Trojan war.' STRABO, book 1.

as little upon ſuppoſition, as the diſtance of time and nature of the ſubjects will permit.

That Homer had the opportunities mentioned, and that he did not neglect to improve them, will beſt appear by conſidering what he has really learned from the Phenicians: this will be a certain proof of his converſing with them, at the ſame time that it will ſet the happineſs of this circumſtance of his life in a true light: and if they were leſſons of importance, it will increaſe at every ſtep, as we ſhall find this or the other allegory or tale, taken from the relations of that ingenious people.

And firſt, it may not be amiſs to obſerve in general, that many of the Egyptian doctrines and cuſtoms paſſed through Phenicia into Greece: the refugees from Egypt commonly took this country in their way, and afterwards proceeded to the iſlands, or ſettled upon ſome part of the Grecian coaſt: ſome of them made a conſiderable ſtay in Phenicia before they travelled further weſt, and therefore carried along with them into their new ſettlements, both the Phenician arts, and the Egyptian learning.

Thus Cadmus, when he had ſtaid long in Phenicia, went to Lemnos, Imbrus, and Samothrace, and is ſaid to have carried thither the worſhip and rites of the Phenician Cabeiri or great Gods, and taught the inhabitants their initiation and myſteries, for which they were afterwards ſo famous:

though I rather think the Telchines, or the Idæi Dactyli were there before him: for why ſhould he not rather have eſtabliſhed his favourite worſhip in Thebes, where he finally ſettled?

His ſon-in-law, Ariſteas, reigned in Cea; his grandſon Bacchus in Naxos. Phalanthus, another Phenician, took up his habitation in Rhodes, and the celebrated Anceus ruled in Samos. He was one of the Argonauts, and the only aſtronomer among them. His mother gave her name to the iſland Aſtypalea; and the greater part of the Cyclades received names from the Phenicians, which were derived from thoſe accidents and appearances that occur to a ſea-faring mercantile people. Their ſeveral origins have been nicely inveſtigated by the laborious Bochart; and they appear to have been given in the ſame way as the Spaniards and Portugueſe, when they diſcovered the Indies, called their countries and rivers, Tierra de Fuego, Tierra de Brea, Terra dos Papos: Rio grande — De la Plata — De las Concas; and ſuch others.

But beſides this early intercourſe between the Greeks and Phenicians, and principally the iſlanders[a], among whom Homer lived, there was an-

[a] There are ſeveral proofs of this commerce in holy writ, where Tyre and Sidon, the chief towns in Phenicia, are commonly joined with the Iſles. Thus 'all the kings of Tyrus 'and all the kings of Zidon,' are joined with 'the kings of 'the iſles which are beyond the ſea[b].' And more particular-

[b] Jerm. xxv. 22.

other piece of good fortune attended him. In order to converſe with the Egyptian prieſts, there was a neceſſity of making a voyage to Egypt: but there was no need of travelling into Phenicia, to meet with a Phenician captain, or the governour of a colony: they themſelves went over all, carrying their knowlege and experience along with them. Their manner was, to go out early in the ſpring upon a trading voyage; ſome to the Boſphorus and Euxine, ſome to the Egean and Adriatic; others paſſed the Streights, and ſteered to the Gum coaſt on one hand, and as far as Britain on the other; and when they had ſearched through all for merchandiſe, they returned loaded home late in the year.

To this intelligent and wide-ſpread nation, I am apt to think our poet ſtands indebted for his foreign geography.— This is an uncommon way of ſpeaking; but it will be eaſily underſtood when we reflect, that Homer was more capable of giving than receiving inſtruction in the geography of Greece,

ly by another prophet, Tyre is called 'the city ſituate at the 'entry of the ſea, which is a merchant of the people for ma-'ny iſles *: the men of Dedan were her merchants; many 'iſles were the merchandiſe of her hand †.' And at her fall, 'the iſles were to tremble; the princes of the ſea to come 'down from their thrones, and lay away their robes ‡; the 'iſles were to ſhake in the day of her fall, and the iſles that 'are in the ſea to be troubled at her departure §.' Theſe iſles were no other than Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, and the iſlands of the Archipelago, where Homer lived.

* Ezek. xxvii. 3. † Ibid. 15. ‡ xxvi. 15. § Ver. 18.

the Lesser Asia, and perhaps the Egyptian coast: but what further knowlege appears in his writings of the other tracts of land in Europe, Asia, and Africa, that, I judge, he has received by information from the Phenicians.

My reasons for this opinion are these: by staying in Greece, and making short voyages among the islands, or even down to Egypt, he could never learn that the earth was begirt on all sides with the ocean, as he often says it is: But the Phenicians, who had made long voyages upon the Red and Mediterranean seas, who had passed through the Streight of Gibraltar, and sailed the coast on either hand before Homer's days, and were actually making such voyages annually during his life, they might tell him, that wherever they came, they found the general barrier was the Ocean [a].

From the same sea-faring people, he must have heard what countries were the Boundaries and Ends [b], as he calls them, of the habitable globe. Some of these he plainly names by their proper appellations; others he points out by such marks and peculiarities, as demonstrate that he was not ignorant of their situation. To the south, he directly mentions Afric, Ethiopia, and what we take for Arabia [c], as the uttermost parts of the world: to

[a] They named it so from this very circumstance. See page 106. in the notes.

[b] Πειρατα Γαιης. Ὀδυσ. δ.

[c] Ερεμβυς.

the North, he describes the life of the Hyperboreans, just as we know the Scythians and Tartars lived, people that inhabit the northern continent: to the East and West he names no country, but says frequently, *That the sun rises from*[a], *and sets in the ocean*[b]; which can have no other meaning, than that the Asiatic continent on the East, and the European on the West, are bounded by the watery element. This is the only sense the expression will bear; and any other put upon it, makes it a plain absurdity.

It is the more remarkable, as it comes from a man who lived between two great undiscovered lands. Ionia had the vast continent of Asia lying due east from it; a very small part of which was known to Homer himself, or to the Greeks long after his time. There is no mention made of Babylon or Ecbatana in all his writings, which he, who celebrates the wealth of Thebes, and arts of Sidon, could never have omitted to do, had he known any thing of the Assyrian or Median empire[c].

[a] Ἠλιος μὲν ἔπειτα, etc. Ὀδυσ. γ.
The sun a-new wide-gilded all the fields,
From the deep-flowing Ocean rising bright.

[b] Ἐν δ' ἔπεσ' Ὠκεανῷ, etc. Ἰλιαδ. Δ.
Down in the Ocean dipt the blazing sun,
Involving all in night. ——

[c] Ὅμηρος γ' οὐκ οἶδ' ὅτι τὴν τῶν Συρων, etc. 'Homer had no knowlege of the Syrian, nor of the Median empire. For he who names the Egyptian Thebes, and celebrates the wealth of it and of Phenicia, would never have passed over in silence

Nay, so late as the reign of Darius, the Lacedemonians did not know the distance of Susa or Babylon from the sea[a]: so that I believe Homer was acquainted with little more of the inland country, than what was under Priam's dominion, or inhabited by his allies.

On the other hand, to the west of Greece, lay Italy, a greater country, as they imagined, than their own, and then undiscovered by the Greeks: behind it, were the wide and unknown tracks of Gaul, Germany, and Spain, which were impervious at that time, and had all the appearance of an Ἤπειρος, or *endless continent*. Now, for a person living betwixt the two, and knowing little of either, in comparison of the whole, save the nearest coasts; for such a person to say, "That the sun rises and "sets in the ocean; that the ends of the earth are "upon the ocean; and that the Ethiopians, the "last of men, dwell upon the ocean," plainly shews an acquaintance with a trading nation, who could only discover the limits of the habitable world, and relate them to a curious inquisitive man at his return. And indeed through all Homer's works, the mention of coasts, and silence concerning the

'the grandeur of Babylon, nor of Ninus and Ecbatana, had 'he known any thing of these kingdoms.' STRABO, lib. 15.

[a] Εἰρετο ὁ Κλεομένης, etc. 'Cleomenes, king of Sparta, 'asked Aristagoras the Milesian, how many day's journey it 'might be from the Ionian sea, before one could reach the 'king? to wit, of Persia.' HERODOT.

inland countries (excepting thoſe of Egypt and Greece,) ſeems to beſpeak that kind of knowlege which a man may learn from the relations of a people addicted to navigation, who viſit all maritime places, but never go far into the country, from their ſhip.

As for the inner-ſea, the Mediterranean, he deſcribes the coaſt quite around it; but with this difference, that he ſpeaks of the north-eaſt end of it[a], ſo particularly and minutely, as to convince his reader, that he had viſited it in perſon. He names all the towns and rivers; he deſcribes their ſituations and their ſoils: one country is rocky and mountainous; another fertile and plain: one is dry and ſandy; another moiſt and full of verdure: this is productive of ſheep; that abounds with horſes; a third ſwarms with pidgeons; and a fourth is bleſſed with beautiful woman. And theſe accounts of the ſeveral places, and their qualities, are all confirmed by the ſucceeding geographers.

But when the poet comes to mention the countries and nations lying round the weſt end of the Mediterranean, he talks of them as a man who had heard of theſe places from travellers; I mean, ſuch people as are willing to tell wonders of the diſtant regions they have ſeen, and take pleaſure in amaz-

[a] *Omnis Graeciae fabuloſitas*, etc. 'Out of this bay all the 'fabulous part of the Grecian ſtory, and all the luſtre of learn-'ing firſt ſhone forth: wherefore we ſhall dwell on it a little 'longer than uſual.' PLIN. Nat. Hiſt. lib. iv. §. 1.

ing people with ſtories of giants and monſters, witches and wilds, or of any thing beyond the common run of life, either for good or ill. And yet theſe very ſtories, ſtrange as they are, and diſguiſed with all the ornaments of fiction, bear ſtill about them ſome marks of truth: the ground-work of the wonder is commonly ſomething real; and ſhews the juſtneſs of our philologiſt's obſervation, "That to frame a new wonder, without any pre-"vious foundation from truth, is not in the man-"ner of Homer [a]."

Thus when we conſider his accounts of the northern nations, "Who live, ſays he, upon mares-"milk, indigent, haughty, and the juſteſt of "men [b]," the deſcription appears at firſt ſomewhat fooliſh: but upon a nearer view, we diſcover the truth of it, and ſee the beauty that reſults from ſuch variety of character in a poem. —— We find here were really ſuch people; ſuch the Romans found them, when they extended their conqueſts to the north; and we ourſelves find the ſame cuſtoms and manner of life prevailing among ſome of the Tartar-tribes at this day.

[a] See the note, page 135.

[b] —— Πάλιν τρίτην ὄσσε φαανὰ, etc. Ἰλιαδ. Ν.

—— His radient eyes he turn'd
Aſide from Troy, and high o'erlook'd the land
Of warriors wont to combat hand to hand,
Myſians, and Thracian horſe——
A ſtately race,— mare's milk their care and food;
Strangers to wealth; ſuperlatively good.

The Poliſh hiſtorians tell, that after the death of Stephen, one of the braveſt of their kings, there came ambaſſadors to Poland, from the Cham of Tartary, who was a condidate for the crown[a]. They had inſtructions to repreſent to the dyet, "That the Cham was a prince of great power, and "could raiſe three hundred thouſand horſe, which, "if they choſe him king, he would either imploy "in the defence of Poland, or to conquer the neigh-"bouring nations, and enlarge its dominion. That "as to his perſonal qualities, he was temperate and "ſober, caring for no delicacy in his eating, and ſa-"tisfying his hunger with horſe-fleſh only. That be-"ing informed there were differences among them "about religion, he gave them aſſurances that their "pope ſhould be his pope, and their Luther ſhould "be his Luther, juſt as they pleaſed to determine." We can trace this ſame kind of Scythian or Tartar life, always among their horſes, unſettled in their lands, and free from avarice, through the various periods of hiſtory[b], from Homer and Heſiod, down to our times.

[a] Anno 1586.

[b] Γλακτοφαγων ἰης αἶαν, etc. HESIOD.
Milk-eaters land, whoſe waggon is their houſe.

Πρῶτον μὲν ἐνθὲν δ' ἠλίου, etc. ESCHY. PROMET.
Hear then — from hence to yonder riſing ſun
Direct thy courſe; and tread the untill'd lands
Of Scythian ſhepherds, arm'd with truſty bows,
Who dwell in airy houſes, wove with twigs,
That roll on carriages from place to place.

But it is worth while to rank the ſeveral countries round the Mediterranean, and conſider how Homer has mentioned them ſeparately. The laſt part of our enquiry gave us a view of this mythological ſcience, and of his capacity to inſtruct in another channel. Abſtracted relations and general reſemblances were to be applied to life and manners: but here, a part of his veracity muſt appear, and that knowlege of perſons and places, which was ſaid to be neceſſary to an epic poet. It muſt indeed be allowed to appear in its own dreſs, and to put on ſome ornaments for our entertainment; but will never be admitted without a natural foundation.

It has been obſerved already, that Greece and Egypt, (including the Aſiatic coaſt) are his proper province; and a very wide one they were. He ſpeaks of them with the familiarity and exactneſs of a man, who had lived in the one,

Ἐν τοῖς Σκυθαις, etc. Αἰσχιν. Διαλογ. β. Ἐρυξιας.

'They have no uſe for a houſe among the Scythians; neither 'would any man in Scythia, if he was to have his choice, pre-'fer the fineſt palace in the world to a leather coat.'

Campeſtres melius Scythae, etc.

The wandering Scythian better far,
And rugged Getes their life contrive:
Whoſe moving houſes on a car,
Follow where'er their maſters drive;
Whoſe open fields no landmarks know;
But freely yield unrented grain;
Who twice the ſame ground never plow,
But ſhift at will from plain to plain.

HOR. lib. iii. ode 24.

and viſited the other. But he beſtows an epithet upon the latter, which ſurprized me at firſt reading: he calls it Πικρην Αιγυπτον, *the bitter Egypt.*

It is hard to conceive in what ſenſe this term was applicable to a country he had formerly deſcribed as wealthy and powerful, and the fruitfulleſt ſoil in the known world. It was nothing ſtrange to hear him call it Ευρρειθην Αιγυπτον, *the well-watered Egypt*, and the rich Egyptian fields, Περικαλλεας Αγρους, *moſt beautiful lands.* It was rather a new proof, and not a weak one, of his having viſited that country in perſon. But upon a little reflection, this too appears to be extremely juſt: it ſhows that the poet, accuſtomed to the general eaſe and liberty of Greece, has been ſtruck with the ſtrictneſs and ſeverity of the Egyptian regulations.

A poor man could not wander up and down idle in Egypt, as he might do in Homer's country: for a people once diſciplined, and under a ſubordination of command, are bound down to their taſks; there is no ſhifting nor delay; their maſter's will muſt be punctually fulfilled, and ways are taken to make men toil, in order to ſupport the luxury of a few: the greater part muſt do ſo, for their own livelihood; and when they themſelves, and their work, become the property of others, more coercive methods are applied.

Egypt was the country where they had a peculiar law, obliging every man to give an account of himſelf, once a year, to the magiſtrate: he was to

tell, "Where he lived? how he was ſupported?" "and what he contributed to the public-weal?" This law could be executed with greater eaſe, as the lower Egypt, where the ſtrength of their government lay, was but a narrow country, which made it no difficult matter to keep a ſtrict eye over the ſubject; and being full of rich populous cities, every inch of ground in it became precious, and the people who poſſeſſed and cultivated it were of conſequence perfectly known. The policy of the towns in Holland are no ill image of theſe antient regulations; nor a weak inſtance of the influence of ſituation and government; ſince it produces ſome likeneſs between ſuch different characters, as an Egyptian and a Hollander.

Homer's expreſſion, it is true, hath a particular reſpect to a ſtate of ſervitude; and indeed we know from the beſt authority, that the Egyptians were terrible maſters: their rigid policy, and immenſe public works, palaces, temples, canals, lakes, pyramids, all things of incredible labour and ſtupendous magnificence, might have ſome hand in theſe ſeverities; and at the ſame time make them ſo fond of their ſlaves, that ſigns from heaven, and what they themſelves took to be the finger of God, could hardly prevail with them to ſet a whole nation of them at liberty. But it is certain, that over all the world there are great hardſhips and intenſe miſeries in the wealthieſt cities: and it was finely judged of our poet, to diſtinguiſh this rich

country by a ſentiment which expreſſes an effect of their conſtitution, that hits not the eye of every ſpectator.

To the north and north-eaſt of Greece, Homer mentions the Thracians, Cimmerians, and hints at Colchos and the Euxine. Theſe people he might know three ſeveral ways: either from the relations of Jaſon and his companions in the Argonautic expedition; or from the Phenicians, who were conſtantly paſſing and repaſſing in the Propontis, and ſailing through the iſlands; and moſt certainly, from the inroads that ſome of the Cimmerian tribes had made upon the Leſſer Aſia, his own country, long before he was born.

In thoſe climates, the winter-days are ſhorter, and ſky more cloudy, than in Egypt and Greece: from whence he has taken occaſion to feign a ſtrange nation, covered with perpetual darkneſs, and never viſited by the beams of the ſun. Their ſeats he has not certainly aſſigned; but leaves them among the *out of the world wonders* which Ulyſſes ſaw in his peregrinations. Bochart has ſhewn their name to be plainly Phenician[a], and the origin of it to be the ſame dark appearance that gave riſe to the fable.

But as the Phenician trade lay chiefly up the Mediterranean, it is to the weſtward that Homer's

[a] *Cimmir*, nigreſcere; *Cimrir*, tenebrarum atror; *Cimrire jom*, atrores dici. 'CIMMER, to grow dark or black; CIMRIR, the gloom of darkneſs; CIMRIR JOM, the horrours, '— blackneſſes of day.' BOCHART. Cannan, lib. i. §. 33.

obligations to them lie thickeſt, and the greateſt preſumptions of his borrowing from them his accounts of thoſe countries. Many of his wonders are to be found in Greece; but his ſtrangeſt tales, his Δεινα Πελαρα, *horrible portents*, as he calls them, are in foreign parts. And firſt, Italy furniſhed him with abundance of monſters: the Adriatic coaſt, that lies oppoſite to Epirus, and the gulph of Tarentum, were too well known, and too much frequented by his countrymen, to produce many miracles: but the weſt-ſide, whither the Greeks had then ſent no colonies, was only viſited by the Phenicians: and accordingly there are many ſupernatural things told of its promontories, and of the iſlands that lie along that hollow coaſt.

In the entry of the Sicilian Streights, the Faro of Meſſina, ſtood two diſmal rocks, the deſtruction both of ſhips and ſailors. At the foot of the one there was a darkſome cavern, the abode of the man-eating monſter Scylla, and oppoſite to it was the devouring Charybdis. There is but a narrow paſſage between them; and if you do not ſail through it, you have no choice, but paſs you muſt between other two, the dreadful Planctæ: they were claſhing rocks, that caught and ſhattered the unwary ſhip, and left the broken planks, and mangled bodies to be toſſed by the waves, and blaſts of pernicious fire.

After you have paſſed them, the Sirenuſæ appear,

or rocks inhabited by the enchanting Syrens, who firſt allured the paſſing mariner with their voice, and, when he approached, deſtroyed him. Further up the coaſt were the Leſtrygons; cannibals likewiſe, who ſlaughtered and fed upon the unhappy wretches that were ſhipwrecked on their ſhore: and beyond their country was the ſuppoſed boundary of Ulyſſes's earthly navigation, the habitation of a powerful ſorcereſs, the infamous Circe. She dwelt in a Peninſula[a]: "Where, ſays Homer, was the "abode of the morning, and out-goings of her pa-"rent the ſun."

All theſe were in Italy, or hard upon the ſhore; and how wild and fabulous ſoever they may appear, there are few of them, but upon enquiry, we find to have ſome natural foundation. Their names and qualities plainly ſhew their Phenician extract; and that they were propagated by that induſtrious people, from the adventures they met with in the way of their trade.

The Phenicians, upon their firſt reſorting hither, and attempting to land, found the natives of the country extremely inhuman and barbarous; and therefore reported in general, that all the coaſt, up and down, was full of monſters. The paſſage in the mouth of the Faro is but narrow; and as there is often a great ſea rolling in it, it is probable they have ſometimes ſmarted for venturing through. On

[a] Αιαια Νησος, A land-iſland.

the one hand is a dangerous vortex; and on the other ſtands Scylla's rock, a threatening precipice, exactly ſuch as Homer deſcribes it, "tow'ring, ſteep, "and its top in the clouds[b]." It is joined to the land by a flat iſthmus, upon which, it would ſeem, the inhoſpitable barbarians uſed to paſs, and lurking among the cliffs, ſet upon and murdered the ſea-faring people, who had taken ſhelter under it, to ſhun the whirl-pool on the other ſide. For this reaſon Scylla, or *deſtruction*[c], a monſter with many heads and hands, lived at the foot of it; and oppoſite to it was Charybdis, or the *chaſm of perdition*[x].

The Planctæ have been hitherto looked upon as utterly fabulous. "Two wandering rocks that "daſhed together, and hurricanes of fire blowing "in the ocean," ſeem to have exiſted no where but in the brain of the poet: and yet, my Lord, one of them is apparently true, the other really ſo, and ſometimes both.

I take the foundation of the fiction to have been ſome of the iſlands that lie in the ſea, between Sicily and the Circeian Promontory. It would be te-

[b] Οἱ δὲ δύω Σκόπελοι, etc. Ὅυσ. Μ.

Two rocks there are, one rearing to the ſky
Its taper head, and round it conſtant hangs
An azure cloud. ———

[c] SCOL; *exitium, infortunium lethale.* 'Deſtruction, — a 'deadly diſaſter.'

[x] CHOR-OBDAN; *foramen perditionis.* 'The gulph of 'perdition.' BOCHART. Canaan. lib. i. §. 28.

dious to enumerate them all, and perhaps too minute and dogmatical, to fix upon the two deſcribed in the Odyſſey; it is ſufficient to know, that all this coaſt, and the iſlands that lie along it, abound with burning mountains, and are ſubject to frequent eruptions of fire. The moſt remarkable of them lie in a knot together, to the north of Sicily, and are known by the name of the Liparean iſlands. They were antiently ſeven in number, but now you may count upwards of a dozen, ſome of them having been ſplit by earthquakes, and other new ones caſt up by the heavings of the ſubterraneous fires, which undermine that dangerous ſhore. Theſe, are no more than bare deſert rocks, called by the Italians, *Parte rotte*, "Parts broken off by the "ſhocks of an earthquake."

Now, the courſe of a ſhip from the Circeian Promontory to Ithaca, lies directly either through the Faro, between Sicily and Reggium; or if you will not hazard that paſſage, there is a neceſſity to ſail through the Lipareans, and ſo round the iſland [a]. After you have paſſed the two neareſt of theſe iſlands, if you caſt an eye back upon them, you will find, that they appear to be running together, and in a little time that they are become one, ſince you left them.

[a] Αὐτὰρ ἐπεὶ δὴ τάς γε παρίξιλάσσωσιν Ἑταῖροι, etc. Ὀδυσ. Μ.

When once their rocks by dint of oars you paſs,
I will not thence particularly ſhew
What courſe you are to ſteer, but in your mind
Conſider which, while I deſcribe them both.

The reaſon of it is the current, that ſets in between them, and does not allow you to keep a ſtreight courſe, after you have made good your paſſage: whereas, if you vary but a very little from it, you loſe the line that directs your eye through the void, and take them up under one. Hence the foundation of the fable, that they were floating rocks, which run together as a ſhip paſſed, to catch and cruſh her. The ſame appearance will enſue in the caſe of any two prominences that are contiguous; and for the very ſame reaſon, the Cyanean iſlands, in the mouth of the Boſphorus, got the name of Symplegades, as if ſometimes they had been ſeparated, and afterwards had cloſed and coaleſced into one.

But this appearance, though it may have ſerved to confirm the fiction, was not ſufficient to raiſe the dreadful idea that Homer gives of them. I therefore believe the Phenicians have happened to paſs, or have been lying at anchor among theſe iſlands, at the time of an eruption and earthquake. All over the Lipareans [a], there are clefts in the ſur-

[a] Petrarcha, ſpeaking of a Lover's heart, deſcribes it thus:

Dentro, confuſion turbida, et miſchia, etc.
Within it reigns confuſion, and a train
Of doubtful pleaſures and of certain pain:
Never volcano in ſuch fury flam'd,
Lipari, Iſchia, Stromboli, nor fam'd
Etna itſelf: — but ill adviſ'd are they,
Who ſtake their happineſs at ſuch a play.

TRIUMPH of Love, chap. iv.

face of the ground, and vents in the rocks, that emit flame by night and ſmoke by day: ſome of them have noted volcano's, which, like Veſuvio or Mon Gibel, diſgorge with their flames immenſe quantities of aſhes, and throw out ſtones of ſuch a monſtrous ſize, that a great part of the ſea is choaked up, and one of the iſlands almoſt joined to Sicily by an Iſthmus of the rubbiſh. At ſuch a juncture, the frighted mariners might ſee the rocks really claſhing, and their dire experience feel Πυρὸς Ολοοιο Θυελλας, *Storms of deſtructive fire.*

This circumſtance alone, were there no other ſigns of agreement, ties down the Planctæ either to the Liparean iſlands, or to the rocks that ſurround Iſchia, and participate of the diſaſters of the Neapolitan ſhore. Here the Phenician veſſels that eſcaped, and perhaps ſaw their companions periſh in the infernal tempeſt, needed only relate the terrible ſcene, of ſeas, and flames, and rocks in an uproar. Their literal deſcription is the ſum of the fable; and what is added wears the ſame appearance of probablity. Circe, to exagerate the danger of coming near theſe rocks, ſays, "That the birds of the "air could not paſs them." The ſame thing is told of the Aornos, and other peſtilentious places, where yet the air is not put in ſuch commotion, as by the flame and vapour iſſuing from a burning mountain. The ſtorm it raiſes, and the ſulphureous ſteams thrown all around it, might very readily

bring down a flying fowl, and give a handle to the beautiful fable which Homer has grafted upon ſuch an accident [a].

"It is no rare thing, ſays Strabo, among theſe "iſlands, to ſee flames rolling upon the ſurface "of the deep. They proceed from the caverns of "fire below, which often find a vent, and force their "paſſage up through the waves. Poſidonius writes, "that within his own memory, one morning about "the vernal equinox, the ſea between Hiera and "Uſtica appeared to heave, and was raiſed to a "ſtrange height; that it continued for ſome time "to ſwell and to fall by turns, and afterwards "ceaſed. That thoſe who ventured to ſail near "it, ſeeing the fiſhes driving dead with the cur-"rent, and being ſcorched with heat themſelves, "and almoſt choaked with a noiſome vapour, "made what ſpeed they could to the ſhore: ſome "of the ſailors in the ſkiff that went neareſt expir-"ed; the reſt, with great difficulty, got back to "Lipari, where they fell into fits, like perſons "ſubject to the epilepſy, and frequently loſt, and "then recovered, the uſe of their reaſon. For ſome "time after, there was a kind of clay and ſlime "found floating upon the ſea; and in many places

[a] Τῇ μὲν τ' οὐδὲ Πετηνὸ παρίφχεται, etc. Ὀδυσ. M.
That dreadful paſs no flying fowl dares wing,
Nor turtles who to Jove Ambroſia bring:
The gliding rock ſtill catches the laſt dove,
But ſtraight another comes from father Jove.

" of it, flames were ſeen to burſt forth, and ſome-
" times clouds of ſmoke and aſhes: the floating
" matter hardened by degrees, and when thrown
" on ſhore, grew like pieces of milſtone. Titus
" Flaminius then pretor of Sicily gave the Roman
" ſenate an account of what had happened, and
" they ſent ſome of the college of the prieſts, both
" to Lipari andUſtica, to do ſacrifice to the Sea,
" and to the Subterranean Gods [a]."

After Ulyſſes had eſcaped the hands of the Cyclops, he left the coaſt of Sicily, and came to the Eolian iſland, were Eolus lived. The palace and oeconomy of this prince ſeem to be purely of the Poet's invention; though Diodorus hath given a long and particular deduction of the names and fortunes of his children. But Homer had ſome reaſon to add, in his figurative ſtrain, " That he was be-
" loved by the immortal Gods; that Jupiter had
" appointed him to be governour of the winds,
" and given him power to let them looſe or reſtrain
" them at his pleaſure." Anciently, the Liparean iſlands were named from Eolus; and the neareſt of them to Italy [b] was ſaid to be the place of his habitation. The aſſertion does not want probability; though the rocky coaſt of Lipari (the largeſt iſland) and great quantities of allum, found in no place of the world, as they imagined, but in this and an-

[a] Strabo, lib. VI.

[b] Strongyle, or the round iſland, now Stromboli.

other little iſle [a], ſeem rather to agree with "The "brazen wall, topped with a ſmooth ſhining ſtone, which run round the Πλωΐη Νησος, *(floating iſland)* where he lived [b].

Betwixt it and Sicily lies Hiera, a deſert rock conſecrated to Vulcan, and from thence receiving its name: here they fancied he had a forge as well as in Etna, becauſe of three Volcano's or Craters, at which it frequently diſgorges flame and ſand, and the burning ſtones I mentioned before. It is juſt under the eye of the inhabitants of Lipari [c]; and they ſee diſtinctly from which of the Craters the flame or ſmoke iſſues, and in what degree, whether languid or impetuous. They likewiſe hear the uncouth ſounds and hollow noiſes under ground, which proceed from the efforts of the ſtruggling matter in the fiery caverns, and generally grow louder before a violent eruption.

a Οὐδαμοῦ γὰρ τῆς Οἰκυμένης, etc. 'Allum being produced in no place of the world, but only here, and in the iſland 'Melos in a very ſmall quantity, and not at all ſufficient to 'ſerve many cities.' DIO. SIC. lib. v.

—— ἔνθα δ' ἔναιεν, etc. Ὀδυσ. Κ.

——Here was th' abode
Of powerful Eolus, fav'rite of the Gods;
A floating iſland; and around it all
Of ſolid braſs there run a matchleſs wall,
Top with a ſlippery rock.——

c Ταύτης δὲ, etc. 'It is all over rock, quite deſerted, and 'full of fire. STRABO. lib. vi.

It was therefore the opinion of the ancients, "That Eolus, from a courſe of obſervations made "upon theſe Volcano's, and by comparing the dif- "ferent ſounds they emitted, and the various "changes in the quantity or violence of the ſmoke "or flame, or their ſhifting from one vent to an- "other; that by comparing theſe with the enſuing "alterations of the weather, he had attained to a "great ſagacity in foretelling a ſtorm, and could "predict how the wind would blow for a certain "number of days after he had obſerved the ſign." This ſkill he uſed, they ſay, with great condeſcenſion and goodneſs to the ſea-faring people: he received them into his harbour, treated them hoſpitably, and directed them when to ſail, and what courſe to ſteer upon the dangerous coaſt. For theſe reaſons, the Phenicians made him Lord of the winds, handed him down as favoured by the immortals, and have given him a name from the ſtorms [a] he aſſiſted them to ſhun.

This way of accounting for Eolus's knowlege of the weather, has found credit from later obſervations. There is a ſympathy and connexion obſerved between the winds and the agitation of the fires, both here and in Etna. They are fierce and violent when the winds are high, and ſubſide when

[a] From AOL Procella, Turbo: MELEC AOLIN Rex Tempeſtatum. Thence the Greeks have formed their Αἴολος. BOCHART. Canaan. lib. i. § 33.

the air regains a calm. It is obſerved beſides, that particular winds produce different effects. The accurate Polybius, who ſailed round theſe coaſts with very inquiſitive eyes, affirms, "That before the "South-wind blow, the iſland Hiera is covered "over with ſmoke like a thick fog, ſo that it ob-"ſtructs the proſpect of Sicily beyond it: that be-"fore a Northerly-wind, the flames ariſing from "the great crater, mount with a clearer blaze than at "other times, and greater noiſe is heard from below: "that the Weſt-wind is preceeded by a middle kind "of appearance, a mixture of ſmoke and flame, "and a fainter noiſe from the hollows of the rock." He concludes his account with what is moſt immediately for our purpoſe, "That from the diverſity "of theſe ſounds, and the various eruption of the "fire and vapour, it was poſſible to know what "wind would blow for three days to come; and "accordingly, that there were people in Lipari "then living, who forewarned the wind-bound "ſhips of an approaching change, and ſeldom fail-"ed in their prediction [a]." In confirmation of

[a] *Naturalis divinatio aliquando certior eſt*, etc. "The art "of natural divination is ſometimes pretty ſure, and at other "times is more ſlippery, according to the nature of the things "it treats of. If the ſubject be in itſelf conſtant and regular, "it affords a certain prediction: if wholly changeable, or e-"ven mixed (as depending partly upon nature, and partly "upon chance) in that caſe the prediction may be deluſive. "But even in a mixed ſubject, if carefully canvaſſed and re-"duced to rules, the prediction may hold for the moſt part.

this, we find that the Lipareans to this day are generally ſeamen, and of ſuch knowlege, in thoſe matters, that Bocaccio affirms there are even few women in the iſland, who have not ſome ſkill *dell' arte marinareſca* of the art of navigation [a].

The connexion between the various qualities and changes of the air, and the force and appearances of fire, cannot have eſcaped your Lordſhip's ſearches into the ſeveral parts of natural knowlege. It muſt be the more preceptible in theſe Volcano's, as the fire is vaſt, and the chaſms, at which they belch the ſmoke and vapour, are widened, and laid open to the air, by the dreadful convulſions of the laboring flames. Nor can they miſs of preſaging a coming ſtorm. For if the openings of the ſubterraneous mazes are at any conſiderable diſtance from the pent-up fire, which they feed and keep alive; in that caſe, a tempeſt brooding from that quarter, and beginning to play upon thoſe openings, muſt quickly produce an alteration at the Volcano's head. But it is agreed on all hands that Sicily and the neighbouring coaſt is quite hollow, and pierced with many croſs-paſſages that communicate under the bottom of the ſea [b] Thus, for in-

It may not perhaps be ſo exact as to anſwer to a minute or an hour; but it will not be far wide of the thing itſelf.'

FR. BACON. Hiſtory of the winds.

[a] Decamerone, Giornata. v. Novella. ii.

[b] Οτι πᾶς ὁ Πόρος, etc. ' All this ſtretch of coaſt, beginning at Cumae till you come to Sicily, is undermined with

ſtance, there is a communication believed to run between Hiera and Sicily; and a correſpondence has been obſerved between the eruptions of Etna, and of this burning iſland, both as to their quantity and violence [a].

It would be too great a digreſſion from our ſubject to purſue this reaſoning much farther: but before we venture upon the reſt of Homer's miracles, it will be pleaſant to obſerve what uſe Polybius has made of this very ſtory of Eolus and his windy empire. He owns it looks extremely fabulous at firſt telling: "The winds ſewed up in a bag, and given to Ulyſſes!" And yet here is a foundation for it, and ſome veſtiges of truth in the heart of the fable: the poet indeed has uſed his privilege; has told it in his own way, and dreſſed it up with ſeveral ſtrange circumſtances, to increaſe our wonder [b]: Wherefore, ſays the hiſtorian, ſomewhat ſeriouſly, "This ſhould make us believe, that the

'fires, and has many cavities, that communicate below, and 'run under ſea between the iſlands and the continent. By this 'means the burning mountain Etna is of ſuch a nature, as 'we all know it to be; and likewiſe the Liparean iſlands, the 'country about Dicæarchia, Naples and Baiæ, and the iſ-'ands Pithecuſæ.' STRABO. lib. v.

[a] Αἰόλωι γὰρ τινες, etc. 'Some authors affirm that there 'are ſubterraneous paſſages from theſe iſlands reaching all 'the way to Etna in Sicily, which communicate with one 'another by openings at both ends; and that, for this rea-'ſon, the Vulcano's or craters in theſe iſlands burn for the 'moſt part by turns with thoſe of Etna." DID. SIC. lib. v.

[b] *Perdona.——S' inteſſo Fregi al Ver.* TASSO

" moſt extravagant things ſung by Homer, are on-
" ly ſo in appearance: but that tho' we do not com-
" prehend it, there is ſtill ſome principle in nature,
" ſome fact in hiſtory, or leſſon in morals, at the
" bottom of the tale."

About thirty miles from ſhore, directly off Naples, and a ſtone's-throw from the ſouth-ſide of the iſland Capreæ, ſtand the Sirenuſæ or rocks of the Sirens. The common opinion about their inhabitants, and the moſt probable, is, " That they
" were leud women, who proſtituted themſelves
" to the ſailors, and, by the allurements of a lazy
" voluptuous life, made them unmindful of their
" voyage, and careleſs of returning to their native
" country." But their ſtory, as it is told by Homer, lies ſo pat for a moral, that it is hard to believe it to be any thing elſe than pure fiction: their charming aſpect at firſt ſight; their beautiful faces and enſnaring voice perfectly repreſent the fair appearance of an object of pleaſure; and their falſe deſtructive nature, their hidden deformities, and the way to ſhun and deſtroy them, agree ſo nicely with the methods preſcribed by the moraliſts, for avoiding a gilded ſnare [a], that it would almoſt be pity to ſpoil the allegory. Nor is there any neceſ-

[a] Ἀινίττεται δὲ ὁ τοὺς, etc. ' This picture, like the Sphinx's
' riddle, repreſents what is good and what evil, and what
' is neither good nor evil in life. Now theſe are things which if
' any perſon does not underſtand he is undone and ruined by
' folly. But if he does underſtand them, on the contrary, folly
' is deſtroyed, and he is ſafe, not only for the preſent, but he

ſity we ſhould: the Phenician accounts of theſe enchanting creatures; their telling how raviſhingly they ſung, and how many crews had been loſt through their means, was ground ſufficient for the poet: they both gave him a foundation for his tale, and ſcop to work it up in the ſymbolical Egyptian manner, until it loſt its ſpecialities, and from a private ſtory, became capable of a general application.

There were ſeveral Syrens up and down the coaſt, who waited for the paſſing ſhips, and for that end took their ſtations upon the promontories, or lived in the iſlands neareſt the ſhore. One of them ſtaid at Panormus [b], another at Naples, others at Surrentum, and the greateſt number lived in the delightful Capreæ in the mouth of the bay of Naples. From thence, it is probable, they paſſed over to the neighbouring rocks which bear their name, to talk with the ſeamen from on board, and perſuade them to moor their veſſel, and come on ſhore. Homer has retained the Phenician name taken from the moſt obvious part of their character, their ſinging [c]; and poſterity, by building temples to them, and aſſigning the particular places of

' continues happy and proſperous through the whole courſe of ' his life.' CEBES.

[b] Palermo in Sicily.

[c] From SIR Cantilena: Inde SIREN Canens, Canorum. ' SIR, a ſong :— thence SIREN, any thing vocal, that ' ſings.'

BOCHART. lib. i. § 33.

their abode and burial, hath made the tradition paſs for a reality [a].

In the ſame claſs with theſe ſinging ladies, Horace has placed the other enchantreſs [b], the powerful Circe; and not without reaſon either from the moral, which he has had in his eye, or from their real ſtory. As to the allegory, "She is a ſorceress, ſkilled in poiſons, and knowing how to mix "an intoxicating draught: ſhe is the child of the "ſun, whoſe beams can only raiſe a plant of virtue, and concoct the juice of herbs, to a healing "or noxious quality. With their aſſiſtance, ſhe "could change and transform the mortal that once "taſted of her baneful cup: ſhe could make him "forget his reſolutions and his duty; renounce "his bravery and manhood; render him deaf to "the admonitions of his friends; and in fine, convert him into ſome ſpecies of a brute, according "to the bent of his ſenſuality."

[a] Ἄϊκων μακρός, etc. 'Their abode was upon a long promontory near to Naples, with a temple of the Sirens, upon one ſide towards the ſea, and three little iſlands lying oppoſite to the other; uninhabited rocks which they call the Sirenuſae.'—'Οτι ἐν Νεαπόλει, etc. 'They likewiſe ſhew in Naples the tomb of Parthenope, one of the Sirens.

STRABO. lib. 1.

SIRENES,—*primo juxta Pelorum*, etc. 'Their firſt ſeat was about the Promontory Pelorus, and afterwards they came and inhabited the iſland Capreae.' SERVIUS Æneid. v.

[b] *Sirenum voces, et Circes pocula noſti*, etc.

The Sirens' ſongs, and Circe's cups you know,
Which had he drunk, as did his greedy crew,
A vile dog he had liv'd, or wallowing ſow.

HORAC. Let. to Lollius.

The truth of the matter is, Circe was herſelf one of the Sirens: like them ſhe ſung, and filled her palace with melody [a]: like them, ſhe lived upon a promontory that run out into the ſea: like them, ſhe waited for the paſſing ſhips, and like them deſtroyed the crews, when ſhe had them in her power. Her name is Circe, the deſtroyer or Puller down [b]; of the ſame falſe nature and deceitful appearance with her ſiſters, and only differing from them as ſhe employed other means for obtaining her cruel purpoſe beſides the charms of her voice.

It is here obſervable, that the contiguous miracles, or the ſtrange things which the poet relates of this coaſt, are much of a piece: his monſters, as well as his men, are of the ſame ſpecies, and bear a likeneſs in their manners: the Cyclops, the Leſtrygons, and Scylla, are all men-eaters: and the female phantoms, Circe and the Sirens, firſt bewitch with a ſhew of pleaſure, and then deſtroy.

[a] She is Θεος Αυδηεσσα, *the vocal goddeſs;* and when they approached her palace,

——— Within they heard
The powerful Circe ſing, with voice divine:

And afterwards,

She ſung delightful, and the hall thro'out
Re-echoed to her ſong. ——— Odyſſ. K.

From KIRCAR, *diruere, perdere, peſſundare:* unleſs the walls that incloſed her palace have got her that name from KIR, *a wall.*

[b] Ενθον δ' ἐν βήσησι, etc. Ὀδυσ. K.

At firſt reading, they appear wild and improbable; but like the other parts of Homer's poetry, they had a foundation in the manners of the times preceeding his own.

It was ſtill, in many places, the age ſpoken of by Orpheus,

When men devour'd each other like the beaſts,
Gorging in human fleſh ——

The ſubject is diſmal, and a particular deſcription of ſuch horrid deeds would be odious and ſhocking. It will be enough to put your lordſhip in mind, that our modern Indians have not been the only people guilty of the dreadful act of feeding upon their fellow creatures. The ſame barbarity is attributed to moſt countries, before the arts of life reached them, and ſtript them by degrees, of their inhuman cuſtoms. The eaſt was deteſtable for offering children to their furious king [a], and Egypt was once infamous for inhoſpitality and murder [b]. The Euxin was glad to change its ſavage name [c], and the altar of Diana, at the mouth of it, ſtood reek-

[a] Moloch, from Melech, a king.

[b] ——*Quis aut Euryſthea durum,*
Aut illaudati neſcit Buſiridis aras? Virgil.
——Who has not heard
Of fierce Euryſtheus? Or th' all-hated name
Of dire Buſiris, and his altars ſtained
With ſtrangers blood?

[c] Ἄξενος. *Inhoſpitable, inacceſſible to ſtrangers,*
Hor. lib. ii. Sat. 5.

ing with the blood of ſtrangers. The human ſacrifices in Britain and Gaul remain an indelible ſtain upon the memory of our forefathers; and Greece, with all its boaſted humanity, was not entirely rid of them at the time of the Trojan war[a]. The Carthaginians continued them long in Africk; and they were not diſuſed in Italy, until the days of Numa Pompilius. Nor did that religious law-giver think fit to aboliſh them utterly at firſt: he chooſe to elude the cruel rite, and ſubſtituted images of ſtraw in place of the human creatures, whom they uſed to butcher.

It was upon the Ides of May, a little after the vernal equinox, that the prieſts of the greateſt dignity, and the virgins who guard the eternal fire[b], accompanied with the pretors, and other citizens, made a bridge over the Tiber[c], and in a ſolemn manner, caſt thirty of theſe images into the ſtream: in throwing them over, they called them, by ancient tradition, Argives[d]; which, as it preſerved the footſteps of this cruelty in Italy, ſo it lets us know

[a] *Tu cum pro vitula ſtatuis dulcem Aulide natam.* etc.
You, when your darling daughter for a calf
You to the altar brought, and her fair head
Beſprinkled, victim-like, with the ſalt cake;
Then were you in your wits?——

[b] Οἱ καλούμενοι Ποντιφικες, etc. DIONYS. lib. i.

[c] The rite was ſo ſolemn, and gone about with ſo much ceremony, that from it the prieſts had their name, PONTIFICES, Bridge-makers.

[d] Ἀργειους ἀντὶ καλοῦντες. Διονυσ. lib. i.

what people for the moſt part furniſhed the wretched victims, and what reaſon the Phenician, and afterwards the Grecian ſailors had to give out, that this coaſt was inhabited by canibals and deſtroyers of mankind.

The oppoſite ſhore of Greece, Epirus, continued long in the ſame ſavage condition. The iſlanders even to the weſt, were beginning in Homer's time to unlearn their rude behaviour to ſtrangers; and as conſcious of being a civilized people, they threaten their offenders "with tranſportation to "the continent, to king Echetus, the ſcourge of "all the human race." So true it is, that the iſlands were firſt brought under diſcipline, and that arts and policy came to Greece from beyond ſea.

They firſt ſettled and took root in the maritime places, and afterwards ſpread by degrees into the heart of the country. It was long before they penetrated to the weſt of Italy, which we therefore find full of prodigies; and the appellations given them by Homer, are as monſtrous as their own natures, and ſound as ſtrangely in a Grecian ear: the etymologies of their names are in vain ſought for in his language, which they only reſemble in their terminations: but the Aramean affords them, and derives them from words that ſhew how theſe names have been impoſed at firſt: they point at the very act of ravening, beheld by ſuch Phenicians as had

the good fortune to eſcape the mercileſs hands of the barbarians [a]; and have been afterwards fixed as proper names, by being often repeated in the ſad relation of the fate of their companions.

But there is too much ſaid for theſe ſavages, and we have dwelt too long upon this black ſide of mankind: let us quit the men, and conſider ſome of the natural wonders of this fabulous coaſt. The city of Sidon is ſituated in thirty-three degrees twenty minutes of latitude, and the Circeian Promontory in forty-two; and if it be true that the Phenician navigation was firſt upon the red-ſea, then that people muſt have been accuſtomed to the near equality of the day and night that happens within the Tropics, and increaſes as you approach the Equator. But when their trade took another turn, and they begun to ſail the Mediterranean, and diſcover the unknown coaſts of Italy, how would they be ſurprized to find the day near two hours longer than at the mouth of the Arabic Gulf, and one hour longer than in their own country?

[a] The Leſtrygons (Λαιςρυγών) Laïs tirgam, from leo mordax; their king Lamus from Laham vorare, deglutire; or Lahm Caro: thence the Goblin's name, that ſwallowed children alive, Lamia; and the Greek word for the throat, Λάιμος. Theſe two, the Leſtrygons and Lamus, have been obſerved by Bochart. The king of the continent's name likewiſe points at his nature. It comes from Catath contundere, caedare, whence Echetoh contuſurus, contuſor erit; and agrees nicely with Homer's epithet:

Εἰς Ἐχέτου βασιλῆα βροτῶν Δηλήμονα πάντων. Ὀδυσ. Σ.

They would be amazed at the quick return of the morning, and think the ſun was earlier upon his road than ever they had obſerved him before. The length of the twilights, longer too than ever they had ſeen, would contribute to raiſe their wonder; and when they compared every thing with their own ſouthern climes, and were come to an anchor under the Mons Circeius, lying due eaſt of them, it was no wonder, if not knowing how to account for the ſudden return of light, they took it into their heads, "That there was the abode of the morning, and the early road of the riſing ſun."

While the Phenicians were making but annual voyages, and had not ventured to winter in foreign ports, they would happen to be in the Tyrrhene ſea and Gulf of Genoa, about the time of the longeſt day. The diſtance of theſe parts from Sidon, and the common accidents in ſlow coaſting voyages, (which the Phenicians could only make to unknown nations) muſt have employed the ſpring-months, and protracted their voyage till that ſeaſon. For I make little doubt but this fable has been framed, when they were neither ſuch geographers, nor aſtronomers, as they came to be afterwards: it muſt have been in the infancy of their navigation at leaſt of the north ſeas; and ſuch a tradition, when once broached, could not fail of being preſerved, and finding a place in all the future relations of that barbarous coaſt. It is too re-

markable a circumſtance not to have ſtruck men, whoſe employment forces them to obſerve the weather, and fixes their chief attention upon the heavens: to ſuch people the abode of the morning was in Circe's iſle, for the ſame reaſon that we here in Britain are characterized by Virgil,

Et minima contentos nocte Britannos.

From Circe's iſle, and by her directions, Ulyſſes ſailed to the infernal regions: we are told, in the poetical ſtyle, "That after having paſſed the ocean, he firſt arrived at a gloomy beach, covered "with thickets and the groves of Proſerpine; poplars and yews caſting a diſmal ſhade. Here he "drew his ſhip on ſhore, and entered himſelf into the manſions of Hell; he trod the threſhold "of the habitations of the dead, and ſaw within,"

The four infernal rivers that diſgorge
Into the burning lake their baleful ſtreams:
Abhorred Styx, the flood of deadly hate,
Sad Acheron of ſorrow, black and deep,
Cocytus nam'd of lamentation loud
Heard on the rueful ſtream, fierce Phlegethon,
Whoſe waves of burning fire inflame with rage[a].

Upon the brink, where two of the rivers met, he was to perform certain ſacrifices to the infernal

[a] Milton.

deities, and pour forth the blood of the ghosts departed.

This description is partly real, and partly mythological. The terrestrial part of it seems to agree with the Avernus, a noisome kind of lake formed by the sea in the recess of the Lucrine bay, not far from Circe's habitation: the rest (too long to be here transcribed) is Egyptian, and relates to the Τιμωρίαι ξεναι [a] mentioned above [b]. Next to the Baiae, says Strabo [c], lies the Lucrine bay, and within it the lake Avernus. It was here the ancients believed that Homer had described Ulysses as conversing with the dead, and consulting Tiresias's ghost; for here they said was the oracle sacred to the shades, which Ulysses came and consulted concerning his return. The Avernus is a deep darksome lake, with a narrow entry from the outer bay: it is furrounded with steep banks that hang threatening over it, and is only accessible by the narrow passage through which you sail in. These banks were anciently quite over-grown with a wild wood, impenetrable by any human foot. Its gloomy shade impressed an awful superstition upon the minds of the beholders; and the neighbouring people affirmed that the birds * fell into the water as they flew over it, being choaked with the infernal steam.

[a] Strange foreign tortures. [b] p. 223. [c] Lib. V.

* Hence its name Aornos; and by incerting the Eolic Afornos; thence in the Italic pronunciation Avernus.

Here therefore they ſuppoſed was the paſſage to Hell, and the ſeat of the Cimmerians, who dwelt in perpetual night. Whoever ſailed hither, firſt did ſacrifice; and endeavoured to propitiate the infernal powers with the aſſiſtance of ſome prieſts who attended upon the place, and directed the myſtic performance. Within, a fountain of pure water broke out juſt over the ſea; but no creature ever taſted of it, believing it to be a vein of the river Styx: ſomewhere near this fountain was the oracle; and the hot waters frequent in theſe parts, made them think they were branches of the burning Phlegethon.

In this very bay Ephorus places the Cimmerians: he ſays they lived in ſubterraneous cells, which they called Argillae; and that they had communication with one another by means of certain dark paſſages cut thro' the earth, by which they conveyed ſtrangers down to the oracle of the dead. He ſays further, that they lived upon the produce of the metals which they dug out of the earth, and upon the ſacrifices that were offered to the ſubterraneous oracle; whoſe miniſters had it as a cuſtom handed down from father to ſon, "That none of "them ſhould ever ſee the ſun," nor quit their "grotts, but under covert of the night." This, he gives as the reaſon why the poet aſſerts, "that Phebus, who enlightens the world, never

" looks upon them, nor viſits them with his " gladdening beams."

This account of the Cimmerians is ingenious, and has ſomething in it both entertaining to the imagination, and agreeable to the wonderous regulations of the ancient prieſthood: but as I would be far from rejecting it, ſo the poet's deſcribing their towns and tribes in this part of the country, is no ſtrict proof of their being really Italians. Homer often tranſports and mixes his miracles; eſpecially if they are of a kind, and bear any analogy in their natures, or reſembance in their manners. Circe is of the ſame blood with Æetes, and is allied to the ſorcereſs Meda, though ſhe lived in Italy, and they in Colchos at the furtheſt end of the Euxine, ſeparated by ſeas and continents of immenſe extent.

The idea of the one-eyed Cyclops, whom he places in Sicily, he is thought to have taken from the Arimaſpians in Thrace; and theſe ſame Cimmerians, from the long nights and cloudy ſky, in the ſame country. This laſt is the more probable, that the Phenicians might be paſſing homeward from the Boſphorus pretty late in the year, and might perhaps be tempted to tarry, upon ſome proſpects of gain, until the winter ſurprized them in that cold climate, and froze up their ſhip: in that caſe they would literally ſee a people Ηερι χ' νεφελη κεκαλυμμενοι, *wrapt up in darkneſs and clouds,*

and might give them a name, which indeed will agree either with Thrace or the Avernus.

Let us now purſue our voyage round the Mediterranean, and for that reaſon leave Ulyſſes ſailing back to Circe, and aſſociate ourſelves with the other traveller celebrated by Homer, the famous Menelaus. The ſouth and ſouth-eaſt coaſt of this ſea ſeem to have fallen to his ſhare, as the north and north-weſt were viſited by Ulyſſes; though I know that the latter is likewiſe ſaid to have been driven both to Spain, (where there was a town of his name, and a temple of Minerva) and to the coaſt of Africk, where he ſaw the Lotophagi. But as the Phenician accounts of theſe parts are related by the poet under the perſon of Menelaus, it will be proper for us to follow him.

After the taking of Troy, the Greeks found they had purchaſed the victory very dear: beſides the men they had loſt, there were few of the ſurviving chiefs who had not ſuffered at home, by diſorders in their families, or damage in their eſtates: nor was the ſpoil that was ſaved from the flames, when the city was burnt, ſufficient to enrich them all. They could not think of ſtaying ſo long away, and returning to their empty habitations with little or nothing, as the reward of their toils; and ſome choſe rather to go and ſeek for ſeats in unknown countries, than to live in their own houſes after

the diſmal things that had happened in them during their abſence.

Thus Diomedes and Teucer went and ſettled, the one in Apulia, and the other in Cyprus: Menelaus and Ulyſſes revived the practice of Greece, making deſcents with their ſquadrons upon ſeveral coaſts, carrying what plunder they met with to their ſhips: and when the diſaſters incident to a piratical life had diſabled them from continuing ſuch violences, they wandered about from place to place, and ſet on foot a kind of contribution (what the French call a *quete*) where-ever they came. Their high reputation procured them a kind reception from all who had heard of the deſtruction of Troy, the greateſt tranſaction the world had then to talk of: and accordingly they received many Ξεννια (preſents to ſtrangers) from the princes they viſited, and both, though late, returned rich to their own country.

The account Menelaus gives of his own travels, is in a very plain manner, "That having ſuffered "many things, and wandered far, he had amaſſed "much wealth, and had come home at the end of "eight years: that having been in Cyprus, Phe-"nicia, and Egypt, and having viſited the Ethio-"pians and Arabians, he arrived at laſt in Libya," of which he tells ſeveral wonders: but the ſtrangeſt thing that befel him, was in the Pharos, a little iſland in the mouth of the Nile. There he ſurpri-

ed and bound Proteus, the mutable prophet of the ſea, and received a prophecy from him, " That it " was not his (Menelaus's) fate to finiſh his days " in Argos, but the immortals would ſend him to the " Elyſian plain, and ends of the earth, where yel- " low Rhadamanthus reigns, and where an eaſy " affluent life is enjoyed by men; where ſnow is " never ſeen nor rain, and winter ſhows not his " hoary face; but ſoft gales conſtantly blowing " from the weſtern ocean, ſerve to cool the air, " and fan the inhabitants of the happy ſhore."

There is no doubt made by the ancients, but that this deſcription is taken from the bay of Cadiz and the ſouth-weſt coaſt of Spain; and there can be as little, that Homer muſt have heard of the nature and ſituation of theſe parts from the Phenicians. It would coaſt but a ſingle thought to recollect, that the Tyrian Hercules, long before Jupiter's affair with Alcmena, had made the firſt diſcovery of theſe lands, and erected the famous Pillars that bore his name. His countrymen took care not to loſe ſo ſweet a commerce; but charmed with the ſoftneſs and delicacy of the climate, and knowing perfectly the value of the commodities it produced, they planted it with colonies, and drew from it the chief ſtreams that filled Tyre and Sidon with ſuch immenſe wealth, and particularly with coin and plate[a].

[a] Tarſhiſh was thy merchant, by reaſon of the multitude

The richneſs of the Spaniſh mines afforded ample materials of hyperbole and deſcription to the ancient writers [a]; and we find in the poets coming after Homer, that the eaſe and affluence of their princes had paſſed into a proverb [b]. This could be known to Homer in no other way but by the report of the Phenicians; who, when they ſpoke of this happy country, the chief ſource of their wealth and grandeur, called it MECHOS ELYSOTH, *The place of joys*, or *land of mirth* [c]. It was the ſhips from thence that "ſung in the Phenician markets, "repleniſhed their cities, and made them very glo-"rious in the midſt of the ſeas [x]." From them therefore our poet has learned the nature of the weſtern region, the blowing of the Zephyrs, and the fertility of the ſoil; and has deſcribed his Ely-

of all kind of riches: with ſilver, iron, tin, and lead they traded in thy fairs, ſays Ezekiel (Chap. xxvii. 12;) where the extent of the trade of Tyre, and the very ſpecies of commodities brought by the ſeveral nations to that mart of the world are accurately deſcribed by the eloquent prophet.

Tarſhiſh was founded Tartiſh by the Phenicians and Syrians, who changed the harſh Sh into T; whence the Greeks formed their Ταρτησσος.

[a] Ποσιδωνιος συντεθυσιᾶ ταῖς ὑπερβολαῖς. Στραβ. Βιβ. I. 'Poſidonius the Philoſopher and hiſtorian, in deſcribing this 'rich country, ſeems all in raptures with his hyperboles.'

[b] Εγὼ τ'ἂν δυτ' Ἀμαλθίης, etc. Ἀνακρ. Ἄπος πάσ.

My wiſh, were wiſhes to be got,
Is not for Cornucopia's ſtore;
Nor o'er Tarteſſus be my lot,
To reign a hundred years or more.

[c] Bochart, Canaan. [x] Ezekiel xxvii. 25.

ſian juſt ſuch a place as the climate of Cadiz, and the Andaluzian plains [a].

It gives a particular kind of pleaſure to learn from what originals a celebrated piece of painting has been taken, and from what object the painter borrowed his idea. We imagine ourſelves to be let into a ſort of ſecret; and diſcover new beauties in the copy, by placing it and the model together, and comparing their mutual lineaments. The ſame holds, and perhaps in a greater degree, in poetical repreſentations. An author, to whom our country owes many a beautiful treatiſe, makes not

[a] *Los fertiles campos de Andaluſia*, etc. 'The fruitful plains of Andaluzia, ſo celebrated by the ancients as the Elyſian fields, and the place of reſt of happy ſouls departed —I viewed this ſpot of earth, than which, either for fertility of ſoil, or benignity of the climate, not beauty of land and water, I never ſaw finer in Europe.'—And ſpeaking of the neighbouring plain of Malaga, he ſays, '*Fue tan grande conſuelo*,' etc. 'So great was the pleaſure which the ſight of it gave me, and ſuch was the fragrancy which impregnated the gales that play among theſe wonderful gardens, full of orange and lemon trees, flowering all the year round, that I began to fancy myſelf in ſome part of paradiſe: for, as far as your eye can reach around, you ſee nothing but what delights every ſenſe. The ſight is entertained with the noble proſpect of the ſea, and of a country full of the moſt beautiful trees: the ears are charmed with the infinite variety of little ſinging birds, who night nor day ceaſe not their chearing ſong: proviſions are here in plenty, and exquiſite both for health and taſte: and the manners of the people are mild, affable and courteous; ſo that to deſcribe every thing, one might compoſe a great book of the excellencies of the place.' Life of Obregon.

the leaſt queſtion, but that the Gulf through which Virgil's Alecto ſhoots into Hell is the cataract of the Velino, three miles from Terni. The river falls down a precipice of an hundred yards high, and throws itſelf with ſuch violence into the hollow of a rock, as to raiſe a continual miſt reſembling clouds, or the ſmoke aſcending from a vaſt furnace [a].

But Homer does not ſeem to have kept entirely to one model: he has divided his deſcription of the next world into three parts, and has taken them from three different originals. The firſt contains an account of the entry to the realm of Pluto, and is taken from the Avernus; the ſecond deſcribes the paſſage, and ſeveral ſtages of the dreary progreſs, copied from the proceſſion at the funerals of Apis up the Nile; the third preſents us with the happy climes prepared for the good and upright, taken from the fortunate iſlands and the neighbouring coaſt: And all the three are made to coincide in ſeveral circumſtances, through the addreſs and good management of the poet.

After this view of the coaſt of Italy and Spain, it would be to little purpoſe to aſk, how it appears that Homer learned theſe things from the Phenicians, or through whoſe hands he received them? It is ſufficient that ſuch knowlege could be drawn

[a] Addiſon's journey through Italy.

from no other fountain; though at the ſame time, it will not be unpleaſant to hear that there are preſumptions in his writings, of his having been perſonally acquainted with this induſtrious people.

And firſt, he knows their character perfectly. When he ſpeaks of them in general, they are always Φοινικες, Ναυσικλυτοι Ανδρες, *The Phenicians famed for ſhipping*, or *renowned at ſea*; "whoſe "merchants were princes, and whoſe traffickers "the honourable of the earth." This is the diſtinguiſhing mark of the nation. Their city "was "inhabited of ſea-faring men, the renowned city, "which was ſtrong in the ſea; ſhe and her inha-"bitants, who cauſe their terrour to be on all that "haunt it[a]." Then their ancient town is Πολυχαλκος Σιδων, *Sidon abounding with metals*: *and the Sidonians*, Πολυδαιδαλοι Ανδρες, *ingenious artful men*. It is impoſſible for any man, though he had lived a great part of his life at Sidon, to give more proper epithets to the nation and city, or more expreſſive of the genius of the inhabitants. But Homer goes further, and ſhews that he has been acquainted with all ranks of the Phenicians.

The mean people of a trading nation naturally fall into tricking and low cozenage; and in this reſpect the Phenician pedlars were the Jews of antiquity; and bore ſuch a character among them as the Jews do among us. Such exactly hath Homer

[a] Ezekiel, Chap. xxvi. 17.

painted them. He calls them Τρωκται, *Scrapers of money* from any thing[a]; and to explain how they did it, he ſubjoins, that they were πολυπαίπαλοι ἄνδρες, *Men with a thouſand ſmall wiles*. There was beſides a great intercourſe between the two nations: the Phenician ſhips, our poet tells, frequently wintered among the Grecian iſlands, and the prince[b] of one of them had a Phenician miſtreſs: ſhe was, according to his deſcription,

Tall and beautiful, and ſkill'd in curious work[c].

Homer relates her ſtory ſo particularly, her father's Phenician name[x], his affluent circumſtances, and how ſhe was carried off by the Taphian pirates as ſhe was returning from the country to Sidon, that one would almoſt think he had heard it from the deſcendants of the family.

This ſuſpicion is confirmed by the knowlege he diſcovers of the produce and manufacture of the country. Moſt of the fine things he mentions, gifts to the Gods, or preſents from great men, are (he ſays) of Sidonian workmanſhip. The fineſt garment in the Trojan queen's wardrobe, was bought in Sidon by Paris, who muſt no doubt

[a] Τρωκτης· ἐ ἐκ πάντος κερδαίνων, οἷον ἀποτρώγων. Συίδα.

[b] Cteſius, the ſon of Ormenus, prince of the rich iſland Syria: or, as the later geographers called it, Syros.

[c] Καλὴ τε μεγάλη τε ἐ ἀγλαὰ ἔργ' εἰδυῖα. Ὀδυσ. Ο.

[x] Ἀρυβας: Softened from Aſrubas, or Aſdrubas, Aſdrubal.

BOCHART.

have been a judge in those matters[a]; and the prettiest utensil in Menelaus's palace was the silver bowl edged with gold, which he had received as a present from the king of Sidon; and it is not improbable that Homer had seen many like it, when in that city himself[b]. In short, he seldom describes toys or any piece of curious work, but he very readily adds, that it was made in Sidon, or brought over in a Phenician ship: and herein he hath the happiness to agree with our sacred chronicle, where we learn, that the wise Solomon[c], when he

[a] Iliad vi. [b] Odyss. iv.

[c] This prince had two fleets, one upon the red-sea, at Esiongabor, and the other on the Mediterranean, perhaps at Joppa; and both of them navigated by Phenicians. For, 'Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants in the navy, shipmen 'who had knowlege of the sea;' and they traded along the coast of 'Arabia, and came to Ophir (Taprobane or Ceylon) 'and fetched from thence four hundred talents of gold, and 'brought it to Solomon*.' The other was called the Navy of Tarshish, which sailed in company with the navy of Hiram. 'Once in three years came the navy of Tarshish, 'bringing gold, and silver, and ivory, and apes, and peacocks†.' It was so long before they could accomplish, in their coasting way of sailing, a voyage by Cadiz to the Guinea coast, whence they brought the commodities above-mentioned. They probably sailed as the Arabs do at this day: "Comme les Arabs ne sont pas de grands Navigateurs, ils "ne voyagent jamais que le jour, aiant toujours un homme "sur la proüe, et un autre sur le haut du mât, pour observer "la mer; ils moüillent d'abord que le soleil est prêt à se "coucher, et ne levent l'ancre, que lorsqu'ils ont le vent en "poupe; employant ainsi deux ou trois mois à une navigation de sept ou huit jours." Voyage du Sr. P. Lucas. liv. vi.

* 1 KINGS ix. 27. † 1 KINGS x. 22.

was about to build his magnificent temple, received a cunning man from Tyre, "Skilful to work in "gold, and in silver; in braſs, in iron, in ſtone, "and in timber; in purple, in blue, in fine lin- "en, and in crimſon; alſo to grave every manner "of graving, and to find out every device which "ſhould be put to him."

But we do the Phenicians an injury in making them only artificers, navigators, and merchants. The nobleſt ſciences were cultivated among them, and they have the honour of being the authors of two famous ſects who gained great reputation, by opinions which the Grecians borrowed from them. We have it upon the authority of Poſidonius[a], that what is called the Atomical philoſophy was firſt advanced by Moſchus a Sidonian, ſome time before the Trojan war: of Atoms, he ſaid, the world was made; matter, in its old primæval ſtate, being in that form. For his work was *a hiſtory of the creation*, or an account of the *riſe of things*, the common theme of the firſt philoſophers: they always wrote in an hiſtorical ſtrain, for the ſake of the narrative or parable in which they taught, and of the allegories which they interwove as epiſodes; there being nothing then known of the manner of our modern ſyſtems, which are built upon metaphyſical principles and abſtract reaſoning.

[a] Ἐν δὲ τῷ Ποσειδωνίῳ φέρεται, ὅτι περὶ τῶν Ἀτόμων δόγμα παλαιόν ἐστιν ἀνδρὸς Σιδωνίου Μόσχου, πρὸ τῶν Τρωϊκῶν χρόνων. Strab. lib. xvi.

I am the apter to believe that it was so, because it is certain that Epicurus was not the inventer of the doctrine of Atoms which he embraced; but received that method of accounting for the *rise of things* from Democritus, who had travelled long in the east, and brought from thence his learning and philosophy. By this means the principles which were so greedily swallowed both in Greece and Rome; and, as a witty writer asserts[a], were embraced by all *the fine gentlemen* of antiquity, came originally from Phenicia. They were preserved in that country by a prophetical sett of natural philosophers, (so Jamblichus[b] calls them) Moschus's descendants or successors, with whom Pythagoras is said to have conversed in his return from Egypt.

It were easy to say a great deal concerning the Phenician Theology transcribed by Eusebius, their records kept in their temples, and the problems that passed betwixt them and the knowing and peaceful prince just now mentioned: but as these things belong not immediately to our subject, nor to the instruction that Homer received from this people, I shall rather select a Grecian disciple of theirs, whose works have some connexion with our poet.

Among the earliest of the Greek philosophers

[a] Mons. St. Evermond.

[b] Ενταῦθα δὲ (Πυθαγόρας) συμβαλὼν τοῖς τε Μοσχου τῦ Φυσιολογου Προφηταις Απογονοις, ϗ τοῖς ἄλλοις Φοινικικοῖς Ἱεροφάνταις. Ἰαμβλιχ. Πυθαγ. βίος.

was Pherecydes, a native of that very island, where we heard that it was customary for the Phenician ships to winter. He has the honour to be mentioned as the master of Pythagoras, (whom he converted from wrestling, to philosophy) and is famous for introducing prose-writing into Greece. He had no living master of his own, to lead him the way in science; but having purchased from the Phenicians, either in his own country, or as is more probable in theirs, some volumes of their sublime philosophy, he drew from thence his knowlege, and acquired a very great name among the Greeks. They looked upon him as the first who had spoke of the Transmigration of souls, a doctrine much inculcated by the Pythagoreans his successors; and read with admiration his accounts of the birth and successions of the Gods.

His country is pointed at in Homer in a very remarkable manner: "Above Ortygia, says the poet, there is a certain island called Syria, if ever "you heard of it, ὅθι τροπαὶ ἠελίοιο, where are the "returns or tropics of the sun." This, it seems, is the mark of the place, which will help us to distinguish it from the neighbouring isles: but without the assistance of succeeding history, and particularly where it relates to Pherecydes, we should never have known what to have made of it: to have gone in search of such an island under the Tropics, would have been as foolish as to think of

contriving a natural meaning for the expreſſion taken in its literal ſignification; and in what ſenſe the returns of the ſun can be ſaid to be in any one of the Cyclades, is a queſtion that would puzzle our beſt aſtronomers.

For a ſolution, the old ſcholiaſt upon the paſſage tells us, that "In this iſland there was a cave "conſecrated to the ſun, which ſhewed the time "of his returns." Theſe are the very words of the commentary; and they ſeem to ſtand as much in need of an explication as their ſubject. I incline to think, that the Phenicians finding the iſland rich in grain, which they much wanted [a], and accommodated with a fine harbour, may have endeavoured to fit it in every reſpect for their winter retreat. With this view it is probable they may have adjuſted a meridian line to ſome hole or cleft in the roof, which admitted a ray of the ſun into the conſecrated cave, and marked the Solſtices upon that line, and what other ſubdiviſions they thought fit.

The uſe of ſuch a thing, for letting them know the turns of the year, and for pointing out the ſeaſons fit for ſailing, needs no enlargement; and their ſkill, in aſtronomy and numbers, leaves as little doubt of their ability to effect it. The ſame

[a] Hiram, prince of Tyre, was to receive from Judaea twenty thouſand meaſures of beaten wheat, and twenty thouſand meaſures of barley, and twenty thouſand baths of wine, and twenty thouſand baths of oil.

thing was afterwards performed, and perhaps more accurately, by Pherecydes; not in the cave, but by erecting a Stylus, whose shadow should mark the advance and recess of the sun to and from the Tropics. Whether this Heliotrope was moveable or not, I cannot tell; but it was long preserved in Syros, many hundred years after the author's death; and from its duration, I take it to have been some *pyramid of brass and stone*, erected and marked in a level from the base, in the same way as the great obelisk brought by Augustus from Egypt, and placed in the Campus Martius near the city; whose shadow, says Pliny, shewed the sun's altitude, and the increase and diminution of the days and nights.

Had Pherecydes lived before, or contemporary with Homer, there would be no doubt but this very machine was the thing described by the poet; but being posterior, it is more likely that he himself took the hint from the Phenicians, and probably out-did theirs, in the exactness of his invention.

There was nothing like this Heliotrope to be seen in any part of Greece, save in this little isle, whose inhabitants, ignorant like the other Greeks, when they came to gaze at the marks, and asked the use of them, could only gather from the Phenicians answer (just what Homer has said) "That they "were the returns of the sun; or, that when the

"sun had advanced so far, he returned the way "he had come." Homer could not miss hearing of them; for if he was not himself in this island, which he has described so happy and healthful, he would certainly be informed of every thing concerning it in Delos, just in its neighbourhood, whither he came every year to sing at the feasts of Apollo.

Here, my lord, we will finish our voyage. We set out from the Hellespont, and taking the coast of Italy in our way, we have returned by Spain and Africk to the Egean sea. What we have seen is sufficient to convince us, that Homer owed most of those tales that raise our wonder in the Odyssey, to his converse with the Phenicians: and as they were told from the natural apprehensions the Phenician seamen and simple Greeks formed from the first appearance of the subjects, that same simplicity has been preserved in the relation, and has accommodated them to the understanding of all ranks of men. It was this happy circumstance that directed the poet to hit the general taste of nations, and to touch the universal ear so just and true, that no change of manners or politics[a] can make his poems be disrelished where they are but read and known.

I cannot bid them farewel, without reflecting with some surprize on Homer's good-fortune in this

[a] See Mons. Perrault's Paralels.

particular. He was equally happy in his wonders as in his religion. Too much ſplendour did not glare in his eyes and darken his miracles; for if your lordſhip will forgive the oddneſs of the phraſe, the beſt light to place a wonder in, is a little obſcurity. His gods and their powers were never ſo much as queſtioned, when he ſung of their marvellous alliances and myſtic generation: nor were theſe countries to the north and weſt of Greece enough known, to make people doubt of the ſtrange and woeful ſtories he related of them. It was ſo late as the times of Auguſtus, when Cocceius and Agrippa cut through the mountains, and cleared the Avernus, that Homer's Hell appeared to be an ordinary bay; and what he ſaid of it, Παντα Ταυτα Μυθος Ειναι, *to be all a pure fable*: but before that, and eſpecially in the infancy of the Phenician navigation, while the coaſt lay unexplored, the miracles would be ſwallowed; and the ſtrangeſt tale he could tell, would paſs for a certain truth.

Such reflections as theſe have ſometimes led me to think, that Homer's art was not ſo great and refined, as we commonly ſuppoſe it to have been: that his good fortune was far ſuperior to his ſkill; ſince he needed but repreſent things both in his own and other countries, almoſt as he heard them talked of. The ordinary ſtrain in which they were related, was nicely calculated for giving them that

air of natural wonder, which affects us so strongly in reading them: a thing hardly to be counterfeited! For a man who understands any subject perfectly, who knows the causes and effects of every surprizing-like thing about it, of consequence talks coolly; and having no admiration himself, can with difficulty raise it in another. When he attempts it, his looks and voice, and labouring sentences betray him, and shew the artifice: but if at any time he can forget himself, and screw up his fancy so as to smother his reason, he may then succeed; and inspire his hearers with a passion he begins to feel: yet his judgment will recur when the fit is over, and leave him the same cool unadmiring person he was before.

I have heard it declared by those, whose business it is to personate characters and their peculiar passions, that they never succeed so well as when they forget themselves most; and have entered into some sort of persuasion, that they are indeed the persons whom they represent. But I hardly know, whether I dare apply their case to our celebrated poet, and venture to say, "That the "more firmly Homer believed the wonders he tells, "he would tell them the better, and paint their "most moving circumstances with a truer feeling "than if he had not been persuaded of the truth "of the facts."

Paulum tu interesse censes, ex animo omnia
Ut fert natura facias, an de industria?

Thus, we have run over Homer's advantages from nature and education: we have ſurveyed the climate where he was born: we have conſidered the manners of his country, its language and religion; and have found from the nature of things, and their conſtant effects, that they were all in the happieſt temper for deſcription and poeſy. We have gone further, and traced him in his private education, his employment, and manner of life, and found them of the ſame nature and tendency: and to account for the wide knowlege of men and things that appears throughout his works, we have looked abroad, and found foreign countries affording the happieſt opportunities man's heart could wiſh, for poetic improvement: their joint effects we have found verified in his deſcriptions, and in numbers of ſhining images, natural alluſions, and ſurprizing tales that grace his writings: but take them all together, and they had not been able to raiſe him to his high ſtation, if the nobleſt ſubject that ever fired the fancy of a poet had not completed his happineſs. Let us, my Lord, conſider it, and conclude the Enquiry.

SECT. XII.

OF the two heroic poems written by Homer, the first contains an account of the hottest period of a long war between the confederate princes of Greece, and the richest kingdom of Asia with its dependencies. The second relates the consequences of that war, and the fates of the several chieftains after the victory. Homer seems to have been destined for writing the history of the whole transaction, by being born in one country, residing in the other, and travelling much in both.

It would be a difficult matter to enumerate the advantages of such a situation. It would be to resume the conditions in manners, language, and travelling, we found to be requisite in poetry; and shewing that by this means they are included in Homer's fortunes. He appears to be the only bard, who equally knew the country of his Hero, and that of his enemies; and except those poets who have sung of civil wars, where the contending parties are of the same country, and where, for that reason, there can be no variety of manners; excepting those, I say, he seems in this respect likewise to be singular among the poets.

I cannot pretend to determine the preciſe time he tarried in each country; how ſoon he left Ionia, or how frequently he returned to it. A great part of his life he ſpent in Chios, whoſe inhabitants were Ionians as well as thoſe of the other iſlands in the Archipelago. It is accordingly certain, that his language and manners are principally Ionic, though all the dialects of Greece are employed in his poetry, and give proof that he has viſited the principal nations, and learned the peculiarities of their ſpeech. His own, no doubt, has been formed where he ſpent his youth; and afterwards, by wandering up and down in Aſia and Greece, he hath attained that eaſy familiar manner of ſpeaking of them, for which he is admired. This is a bleſſing ſo rare in a poet's lot, to be as it were a native of both countries, that it will be worth while to take a view of ſome of its conſequences.

The firſt which preſents itſelf, is, that he muſt have been acquainted with the field of action, the plains of Troy. It was this enabled him to deſcribe it ſo minutely; and give it that air of veracity it bears from thoſe natural incidents he has thrown into his narration. He had them, not by reading or ſpeculation, but from the places themſelves, and the proſpects that ariſe from the culture and diſpoſition of the grounds. Who but the man that had viewed the bendings of the coaſt, and every corner of the fields, could have deſcribed or feigned

the genuine marks of it: the tomb of Dardanus, the ſprings of Scamander, the banks of Simois, the beach tree, with many other circumſtances that diſtinguiſh the environs, and enrich his landſkip? other writers, before they relate an action that happened in any place, firſt deſcribe that place, be it a grove, or rock, or river, or the declivity of a mountain. Theſe they feign according to the ſtrength of their fancy, and then they apply them [a]. Homer mentions his places with an appearance of certainty, as already ſubſiſting, and already known [b]: he does it almoſt in the manner of an hiſtorian, and leaves you to pick up a more particular knowledge of them from the circumſtances of the action to which they belong.

It may perhaps ſeem ſomewhat extraordinary, at this diſtance of time, to affirm "That Homer's "accounts of theſe places are not fictitious; that "his battles were given in no imaginary ſpaces,

[a] *Eſt urbe egreſſis tumulus, templumque veteſtum,*
Deſertae Cereris; juxtaque antiqua cupreſſus,
Religione patrum multos ſervata per annos; Says Eneas to his ſervants, who muſt have known theſe places as well, or better than himſelf.'

A riſing grownd there is without the gate;
And lonely temple of the goddeſs Ceres:
Hard by an ancient Cypreſs ſtands, preſerved
For many years, held ſacred by our fathers.

[b] *——Et in medias res,*
Non ſecus ac notas auditorem rapit.——
——Hurries his reader
Into the ſcene of action; juſt as if
He ſpoke of things well known——

" but correſpond with the real ſtate of the land " and water." Yet a very convincing proof of it may be drawn from the nature of a treatiſe, of which time has deprived us.

Demetrius Scepſius was born at a little village[a], ſituated upon a ſkirt of mount Ida, not many miles from Troy. As he knew every ſtream and brook in the country, and that there was neither hill nor vale, nor hardly a by-way, that had eſcaped his notice, he wrote a commentary of thirty books upon few more than ſixty verſes of Homer's catalogue of the Trojans. There he aſcertained the real places of Homer's deſcriptions, and pointed out the ſcenes of the remarkable actions. He ſhewed where the Greeks had drawn up their ſhips; where Achilles encamped with his Myrmidons; where Hector drew up the Trojans; and from what countries came the Auxiliaries; in ſhort, he fixed the geography of the Trojan affairs, and actually performed what Virgil feigns,

* —— *Juvat ire et Dorica caſtra,*
Deſertoſque videre locos, littuſque relictum.
Hic Dolopum manus; hic ſævus tendebat Achilles;
Claſſibus hic locus; hic acies certare ſolebant.

Or, as it is fancied by a ſofter poet

[a] Scepsis.

* —— Our pleaſure was to view
The late left Grecian camp, and deſert ſhore;
Here the Dolopian band, Achilles there
Diſplay'd his tent; the place this of the fleet;
And this the plain where oft the battle join'd.

Hac ibat Simois; hic eſt Sigeia tellus;
Hic ſteterat Priami regia celſa ſenis.
Illic Æacides, illic tendebat Ulyſſes;
*Hic lacer admiſſos terruit Hector equos.**

Here is the great witneſs for Homer: he appears to his character, and atteſts his veracity after many ſearches into the truth of his relations[a]. But though there had been no ſuch teſtimony remaining, we might know he copied from nature, and deſcribed realities from the effects of the deſcriptions upon our own minds while we read them: it is in this as in other things; no imagination can ſupply the want of truth: flowery meads and horrid rocks, diſmal dungeons and enchanted places, (things all on extremes) can be eaſily imagined: but they take only with young raw fancies, fit to be entertained with ſtories of dwarfs and diſtreſſed damſels. The traces of truth are only irreſiſtible! the moſt fanciful fairy ſcene in the Argenis, or the *****, does not pleaſe like a view of the Callicolone, or a proſpect from the brow of the lofty Ide, becauſe not real. In the one, the harmony

* Here flowed Simois, down this flow'ry mead;
There fair Sigeum's promontary run;
Here Priam's palace rear'd its lofty head;
And there encamp'd the mighty Peleus' ſon:
Here ſtood Ulyſſes' tent; and there the corſe
Of mangled Hector ſcar'd the flying horſe. OVID.

[a] See Strabo, book xiii, where he profeſſes chiefly to follow this author (Demetrius Scepſius) his commentary upon the catalogue, in his deſcription of the dominion of Troy, and the adjacent countries.

eſtabliſhed between the human underſtanding and truth, commands our aſſent: in the other, the mind doubts and wavers, and views them paſſing like a waking dream.

Such was Homer's good-fortune with reſpect to places; and the ſame cauſe has made him equally happy in the knowlege of the perſons whoſe actions he ſung. A ſtranger in Aſia muſt have been a ſtranger to its inhabitants; but Homer, as a native, had many opportunities to know the Trojans, and hear of the nations and tribes contiguous to Troy. We find him able to recount Priam's auxiliaries, and make up the liſt of their leaders, with equal certainty as he had done his Βοιωτια or Catalogue of the Grecian ſhips. His knowlege this way will bear the ſtricteſt ſcrutiny; and as we are apt to ſet a high value upon thoſe accounts of men and countries, that are given by people perſonally acquainted with them, it will not be amiſs to enquire narrowly into the poet's abilities, by dipping a little into his ſubject.

Priam's kingdom, according to Homer, extended from the river Eſepus, the limit of the Cyzicenian territory, all along the coaſt of Propontis and Helleſpont, until you come to the Lectian promontory, over-againſt Leſbus in the Egean ſea. This we learn from Achilles's own mouth, who had ravaged the greateſt part of it. When the unhappy Priam came to him to beg the body of his ſlaughtered ſon, the fierce Greek began to relent;

and thinking upon the reverse of fortune of the aged prince, he says to him:

Before these days, old king, we hear thou rulèdst
O'er many provinces in prosperous state,
From Lesbus upwards, Macar's fertile seat,
All between Phrygia and the Hellespont [a].

The Trojan dominion, therefore, was bounded on the west by the sea, and on the east by the famed mount Ida, whose skirts run north to the Euxine, and south-east to the bay over-against Lesbus. It comprehended nine governments, or provinces [b]; over which it is thought Priam reigned before the arrival of the Greeks. Besides these, he drew auxiliaries from the high countries all around him, as far as from beyond the river Halys on the one hand, and the old Cilicia on the other.

With these, and with their inhabitants, must

[a] Καὶ σε, γέρον, τὸ πρὶν μὲν, etc. Ἰλιαδ. Ω.

[b] I. From Esepus down to Abydos, under Adrastus and Amphius the sons of Merops. II. Abydos, with its territory, under Asius. III. The Lycians under Pandarus. IV. The Dardans under Eneas. V. The Trojans, so called from Troy, under Hector. VI. The Leleges under Altes. VII. and VIII. Two Lyrnessus's: one under Eurypylus the son of Telephus; the other, under Myntes, the country of the beautiful Brisèis, Achilles's mistress. IX. Thebes, opposite to Lesbus, under Eition, where Chryseis was taken, Agamemnon's loved captive; and it was also the native city of the faithful Andromache.

Homer have been acquainted, to give us such a plan of the Trojan power as he has done: and in order to fit him for this task, some events fell out before he was born, which are necessary to be known. As first, "That this very country, formerly the "dominion of ancient Troy, reaching from the ri-"ver Esepus to the Lestian promontory, was, soon "after the destruction of the city, wholly occupi-"ed by the Eolians, a Grecian colony." Next, that within fourscore years after this settlement was made, another Grecian tribe, the Ionians, came and possessed themselves of all the coast from that promontory southward, down to the Cilician border. Not long after this, Homer came into the world, and had access to hear from his own countrymen their exploits, and from his neighbours, the descendants of Priam's allies, the traditional accounts of what passed in the war.

From such remains of the Trojans, as were left scattered up and down in the conquered country, he would hear their side of the story: what friends and ancestors any of them lost in the common cause: what kind of men they were; what armour they wore; what weapons they used, and how nobly they fought before they fell in battle. He has described the houses of some of the princes who lived at a great distance from Troy; has given us an inventory of their armories, the number of horses they kept, and chariots they had laid up,

with all the circumſtances of a family ſtory, ſuch as might be told by one of their poſterity. He appears indeed to have wandered over many of the places he mentions, and to have viſited the native ſoils of the greater part of his heroes, where he might hear their ſtories from their ſubjects and deſcendants; they would not fail to tell them with all the miraculous aggravating incidents, which their love to their chiefs, and the warmth of their fancies could inſpire: and we all know how carefully ſuch traditions are preſerved, and faithfully handed down to the young branches of a warlike family.

The effect of this good-fortune in Homer's ſituation is rather ſtronger upon our minds than the other; as we are more apt to be affected with relations of men and their actions, than of any thing elſe: here, we are judges, and more ready to feel the falſehood of a lame deſcription, than where we have nothing that correſponds to it from within. To perſuade, upon this ſubject, muſt be a thing very hardly accompliſhed in verſe. The common weak-ſide of poetry is, that while we read it, we perceive it is ſo: the fiction every now and then diſcovers its cloven foot, betrays its diſſimilitude to truth, and though never ſo willing, we cannot believe. How well ſoever we may be pleaſed with the ſweetneſs of the lines, and the pomp of the deſcription, the mind is ſeldom ſeized, nor do we en-

ter into the ſubject. The poet gains no aſcendant over our opinions, nor puts us in the leaſt pain for the conſequences. But when we ſit down to Homer, and hear him tell over the number of his ſhips, recount his auxiliaries, whence they came, how they were armed, what their fathers and friends ſaid to them when they took leave, with what hopes they ſet out, and ſo produce, as it were, the muſter-roll of the two armies, we can no longer defend ourſelves; and in ſpite of all our precaution, an opinion creeps upon us, "That every tittle of what he ſays is true[a]."

Another conſequence of Homer's ſituation with regard to his ſubject, is the ſmoothneſs of his language. I do not mean the genius of the Ionic dialect, or its general aptneſs for poetry; though the frequent return of vowels, and the ſportive diſpoſition of the people, are circumſtances of no ſmall importance, either for ſound or character. The advantage I mention, is the ſoftneſs of the proper names of places and perſons with which the poems abound; and their being as it were ready poliſhed to his hand, and fit to be employed in a work where delicacy and grandeur muſt combine to bring it to perfection.

[a] *Denique, Tyndaridem raptam, helloque ſubactas, etc.* Lucret.

But while the ſons of fame their ſongs employ
On Helen's rape, or mourn the fall of Troy;
Take heed, nor ever from ſuch tales as theſe,
That actions by themſelves ſubſiſt, confeſs. CREECH.

Here ſeems to be another ſingularity in Homer's deſtiny. "To ſpeak as eaſily of a foreign country "as he does of his own." His anceſtors had come and poſſeſſed themſelves of all the dominion of Troy; had ſoftened the names of the mountains, the rivers, the vales, and given them Grecian terminations: they had familiarized them into their language before he was born, and he juſt came in time to reap the benefit of it in his poetry.

We are told that Virgil, in his youth, intended to write a poem of the wars of Rome; but after ſome eſſays, he was deterred from the undertaking by the aſperity of the old Roman names. That great maſter of verſe found it difficult to put ſuch harſh words as Vibius Candex, Tanaquil, Lucumo, or Decius Mus, into his poetry. Some of the names of towns could abſolutely find no place in Heroic-meaſure [a]. They were almoſt as frightful as Boileau's Woerden [b], or the hideous Wurts, of whoſe name he ſo woefully complains, as quite ſcaring his muſe [c].

[a] Manſuri oppidulo, quod verſu dicere non eſt. HOR. l. i. Sat. v.

[b] Des villes que tu prens les noms durs et barbares,
N' offrent de toutes parts que ſyllabes bizarres:
Et qui peut ſans fremir aborder Woerden?
Quel vers ne tomberoit au ſeul nom de Henſden?
Quelle Muſe a rimer en tous lieux diſpoſée,
Oſeroit approcher des bords du Zuiderzée? Epitr. 4.

[c] WURTS l' eſpoir du Païs, et l' Appui des ces Murs;
WURTS—Ah quel nom, Grand Roi, quel Hector que ce Wurts?
ans ce terrible nom———
ientot—Mais Worts s' oppoſe. Epitr. 4.

But instead of these, Homer had the most flowing names and sonorous appellations, either imposed by the lately settled tribes, or softened from their ancient rudeness into his own graceful dialect. Succeeding writers have bore testimony to his excellency in this particular; there being few parts of his works from which they have borrowed more largely, than those high-sounding epithets, he every where imposes upon persons and places, and which have been in a manner consecrated to the poetic style, with the unanimous consent of his successors.

But though we know the times of the Eolian and Ionian migrations, and when they settled upon the Asiatic coast, I hardly think that we are got to the bottom of the affair; or that this knowlege is sufficient fully to discover Homer's happiness in being led to the choice of his subject. I am apt to think that these colonies were not the first which crossed the Hellespont, and carried with them something of the western language and manners. I believe there were many bodies of people from Thrace and the islands, who may have passed over at different times, and taken possession of some part of the coast, and who were afterwards incorporated with the former inhabitants.

A presumption of this may be drawn from the names of the Trojans, which certainly existed long before Homer's people came and settled in the

country. They are for the most part plainly of Grecian composition[a]: nay, even the names of the Trojan auxiliaries are generally Grecian[b], though further removed from that country than the Asiatic shore. Nor is this observation confined to persons; but the names of many hills, rivers, and countries all around Troy are manifestly Grecian[c]. But as these may have been imposed by the subsequent inhabitants (the new Greek plantation) we could not build upon this circumstance without the concurrence of other proofs.

And first, we are assured by a native of Pontus[x], one of the northern countries formerly in alliance with Priam, "That the Trojan language had "many words and names in common with the "Thracian." Of this he gives several instances, which it would be to little purpose to transcribe: but what appears very remarkable in them is, that those very instances are generally Grecian terms, as well as Trojan or Thracian. There are indeed many reasons to induce us to believe, that the difference between the most ancient Greek, and the language of Thrace, was not very considerable. The people of Macedon had many names in use among them, which were not understood by the

a Δηιφοβος, Αλεξανδρος, Πολυδαμας, Αντηνωρ.
b Αρχιλοχος, Ακαμας, Αυκαων, Ιπποθοος, Αμφιμαχος.
c Ιδη, Ξανθος, Καλλικολωνη, Αλρηστεια, Πιτυεια, Μαιανδρος, Αιγιαλος, Γυγαιη, Ρυσος.
x STRABO.

inhabitants of Attica and Peloponnesus; and the Thracians who filled all the country to the north of Macedon, from Epirus and Illyricum to the Strymonic bay, and quite down to the Hellespont, have no doubt varied yet more from the Grecian dialect; but still with some affinity to the bordering language.

To confirm us in this opinion, it is certain that the Thracians had anciently great footing in Greece: Tereus a Thracian governed at Daulis in the Phocean territory, where the tragical inhuman story of Philomela and Progne was acted. From thence a body of Thracians passed over the Eubœa, and possessed themselves of the island: they are constantly called Abantes, by Homer, from Abas, a town in Phocis whence they came. Of the same nation were the Aones, Tembices, and Hyantians, who made themselves masters of the old Bœotia; and even the polished Attica itself was inhabited by the Thracians, under the command of the renowned Eumolpus. In a word, the great tracts of land occupied by them, and by the Egyptian and Phrygian colonies, have made the celebrated Geographer assert, "That almost all Greece was "formerly possessed by Barbarians a."

a Εκαταιος μεν ουν, etc. 'Before the Greeks came 'to Peloponnesus it was wholly inhabited by barbarous nations '(Egyptians, Asiatics and Thracians) and in a word, the 'almost all Greece was anciently a settlement of Barbarians.'

STRABO. lib. vi.

This intercourſe between the nations, and affinity of their dialect, will appear ſtill clearer, if we call to mind who were the maſters of the ancient muſic and poetry, and the firſt famed for theſe arts among the Greeks. It was Orpheus, Muſæus, Thamyris, and Eumolpus, all Thracians; who were not only underſtood by the then Greeks, but capable to charm them with their eloquence and melody, and perſuade them to exchange their fierceneſs for a ſocial life and peaceful manners [a]. No wonder then if the Thracian tribes which croſſed the Helleſpont, and ſettled in the dominion of Troy, the Caucones, Treres, and Cimmerians, gave names to their new habitations, which bear an analogy to the language of Greece.

But beſides the Thracians, there were ſeveral other tribes, that, in an ambulatory uncertain kind of life, ſtrayed over Greece, and other parts of Europe, before the Trojan war, whom Homer nevertheleſs recounts among the nations fighting under the banners of Troy. Theſe came not from beyond ſea as auxiliaries to Priam, he having received no manner of aſſiſtance from the European ſide,

[a] Θρᾷκες ἦσαν οἱ ἐπιμελέστατοι, etc. Εὐρ. ἐις Ἰλι. Ῥαψ. β. 'The greateſt proficients in the ancient muſic, were Thracians; Orpheus, Muſæus and Thamyris. This Thracian Thamyris reigned in the country about mount Athos, a man of the ſame manners and deſigns with his neighbour, the Ciconian Orpheus.

[b] See page 27. note *a* in the end.

and muſt therefore have paſſed the ſea, and ſettled in Aſia ſome conſiderable time before the beginning of the war. The moſt diſtinguiſhed of them were the wandering Pelaſgi, the great planters of Greece[a], Italy[b], and the Trojan coaſt.

It would be endleſs to relate their ſeveral ſettlements up and down thoſe countries, and their expulſions from them: it is ſufficient we know in general, that they were a great and populous nation: "Among their other eſtabliſhments, ſays an "ancient hiſtorian, the Pelaſgi were poſſeſſed of "the whole ſea-coaſt of Ionia, with the neighbouring iſlands; but being exceedingly given to "change of place, and a ſudden relinquiſhment "of their former ſeats, they both increaſed in an "extraordinary manner, and were as quickly "brought low:" The chief blow was given them by the Eolians and Ionians, at their arrival in Aſia; who took their towns, drove them from their delicious fields, and forced thoſe that eſcaped the ſword, to take ſhelter in the higher country.

Such commotions are apt to appear ſomething ſtrange to us now; but very unreaſonably, when

[a] Δαναος ὁ πεντήκοντα, etc. Ευριπιδ

——— Great Danaus
Fam'd for his fifty daughters, came to Argos,
And built anew old Inachus's town:
Then made a law, that the inhabitants
Call'd firſt Pelaſgi, ſhould from thenceforth take
From him he name of Danai.——

[b] See Dionyſius Halicarnaſſ. Antiquit. Rom. lib. i.

we conſider how many European families are at this day quitting their paternal habitations, and croſſing no narrow arm of the ſea, to a plentiful land, like the ancient Greeks; but traverſing the ocean in queſt of uncultivated grounds, and running to another world in hopes of bettering their condition. This reflection may ſtop our wonder: and when we think of all theſe removes and interchangeable ſucceſſions of tribes and nations, we ſhall not be ſurprized to hear it affirmed by a man ſo well verſed in the ancient ſtate of things as Strabo, "That about the time of the Trojan war, both "Greeks and Barbarians, as if ſeized with ſome "wandering ſpirit, or acted by a reſtleſs impulſe, "deſerted their native ſeats, and marched in mul-"titudes to invade the poſſeſſions of their neigh-"bours."

It was by this mixture of tribes, and permutation of places of abode, that the coaſt of the leſſer Aſia was in a manner naturalized to the Greeks before the war of Troy. Their neighbours the Thracians had often ſettled in it; and the wandering Pelaſgi, the Leleges, and the Caucones, when driven from the ſhore, had even carried into the upper parts of the country, ſome tincture of the Grecian language, and knowlege of the inhabitants of their mother-ſoil. Add to this, what has been already proved, and which renders all other arguments needleſs, that the Trojan coaſt was peopled

by Cretans under Sarpedon, or the ancient Teucer [a]; and that Troy itſelf was a Grecian city built by Laomedon, and governed by Capys, Tros, and Ilus his deſcendants.

The language therefore ſpoken in Troy muſt have been a mixture of the Thracian, Aramean, and Greek; ſo that it is not impoſſible but the people might make ſhift to underſtand each other. The Phrygians, an inland tribe, were not underſtood by the people of Troy [b]; the Carians, inhabitants of the eaſt, were likewiſe Βαρβαροφωνοι, *of barbarous ſpeech* [c], and the auxiliaries from the ſeveral countries had

Ἄλλη δ' ἄλλων γλῶσσα πολυσπερέων ἀνθρώπων [d].

But the Greeks and Trojans, originally from the ſame country, ſeem to have ſtood in no need of an interpreter to go between them. Paris therefore might be capable to court a Grecian dame in an in-

[a] See page 210.

[b] Ὀτρεὺς δ' ἦτοι πατὴρ, etc. Says Venus to Anchiſes, when ſhe appears to him alone upon mount Ida, and perſonates a Phrygian girl wandered from home. Ὁμηρ. Ἡμν. εἰς Ἀφροδίτην.

Fam'd Otreus was my father, if by chance
You ever heard his name; whoſe powerful ſway
Fair Phrygia owns, with all her ſtately towns.
Your language and our own I fully know;
For in a Trojan-houſe my fondling nurſe
Fed me a little child, kept long from home;
So that I ſpeak your language and our own.

[c] Ἰλιάδ. Β.

[d] Ἰλιάδ. Β.

telligible ſtile; or, if it ſhould be maliciouſly ſaid, that this may be done without much language, Homer himſelf without much difficulty might learn from the deſcendants of the Trojan and Lycian families, the mighty deeds of their warlike progenitors.

This will appear ſtill the more probable, if we conſider that few of the genealogies of the Trojan or Dardan chiefs reach above three or four generations; ſo far they can trace their deſcent, and no farther. A great proof of the late peopling the country. Any of the races that go hither, run into mythology, and derive their pedigree from Heaven; that is, they are the offspring of ſome ſtroling man, or ſtroling god, who came into their country three or four generations ago, (they cannot tell from whence) and left them behind him, as his poſterity.

It was a common phraſe among the ancients, when they addreſſed a man whoſe appearance and converſation beſpoke him to be of a noble family, "That he was not ſprung from the rock, nor "dropt from an aged oak:" Upon this ſuppoſition, when they found themſelves at a loſs for a fleſhly father as the ſtock of their race, they took care to give themſelves ſuch an original as they were ſure would never try to diſprove their claim. But this very want ſhews a recent ſettlement; and a mixture of ſtrangers lately come into the country,

who muſt either impoſe new names upon things, or pronounce the old with the accent and tone peculiar to the genius of their native tongue. In any caſe Homer's writings muſt have felt the ſoftening influence, and been exempted from that harſhneſs, and diſſonancy, which a number of foreign names unavoidably introduce into narrative poeſy.

Theſe are beautiful circumſtances in the poetic deſtiny of our bard: and it might give great diſtaſte, if a compoſition was deprived of the graces that attend them. For is it not here as in life? That we too frequently overlook our enjoyments, and are ignorant of their real value, until ſome cruel accident ſnatch them from us, and make us ſenſible of their worth by their abſence. But Homer's good-fortune, almoſt in every circumſtance of his fate, makes him, methinks, appear like ſome exquiſite ſtatue, the work of his country, and placed with judgment in a well-regulated garden: there, pieces perhaps of ordinary workmanſhip grace this or the other parterre; but all the openings terminate upon this favourite figure, and at every different turn you diſcover a new beauty, and think it more graceful than before.

Yet among all theſe there is generally a chief point of view; ſome advantageous ſtand, which gives the ſweeteſt attitude, and moſt amiable appearance of the figure. This, my Lord, is ſtill before us: it may open upon us at the next turn, and has per-

haps been luckily reſerved for the laſt look, that we may retire full of the idea, and with a higher taſte of the beauty of the original.

The great good-fortune that attended Homer, I take to have been what we may call the material part of his ſubject. "It was a prodigious rendez-"vous of the braveſt inhabitants, and ſons of the "nobleſt families of a free country, wide and war-"like; and engaged in a violent ſtruggle of paſſi-"ons and arms, with another of more effeminate "manners. The effect was, that it afforded him "real, hiſtoric characters for his model."

To ſet this matter in a juſt light, and ſhew the extent of its influence, we need make but this reflection; "That ſuch an aſſembly of the chiefs of "two great nations, diſplaying their virtues and "vices upon the greateſt and moſt intereſting "ſubjects, muſt include the prime characters of "mankind; and of conſequence preſent a poet "with the moſt genuine and faireſt materials that "can beautify a human compoſition."

Let us remember what it is that gives us ſuch perpetual pleaſure in reading the Iliad. That makes us ſtart at the turns in the ſpeeches, and fills us with anxiety and wonder. It is not the beautiful deſcriptions of places, nor even the rage and ardour of the battles. But thoſe high ſtrokes of character that every were occur, and are conſtantly preſenting us with new ſentiments of the human

heart, ſuch as we expect, and from our own experience feel to be true. Theſe can never miſs their aim: they at once charm the fancy with images, and fill the underſtanding with reflection: they intereſt every thing that is human about us, and go near to agitate us with the ſame paſſions as we ſee repreſented in the moving ſtory.

This reflection will bear to be turned on every ſide, and dreads no ſearch be it ever ſo ſevere. In the choice we make of any meaſure in the conduct of our buſineſs or pleaſures, we examine its juſtneſs and expediency, not only by conſidering what good end it ſerves; but likewiſe, what inconveniencies are avoided; what pains or trouble ſpared, or what miſcarriages prevented, to which another method might be liable. Take Homer's ſubject in the ſame light, and it will appear with a pre-eminency hardly to be expreſſed. Such a convention of princes, from different countries and ſoils, but all ſpeaking the ſame language, furniſhed him with great materials, and hindered him from attempting an impoſſibility; "I mean the feigning or form-"ing new imaginary characters, without originals "from which he might copy them." The flouriſhing condition of Greece at that time; the great number of principalities, free cities, and growing republics, ſent forth an aſſembly of Heroes, the world could hardly match ever ſince. The Grecians themſelves confeſſed, that their country, when

much more poliſhed and improved, had never produced ſo many free natural characters, not tainted with politics, not moulded by laws, nor effeminated with pleaſures; and for that reaſon, half-deified thoſe very perſons, whom they knew at the ſame time to be but the ſons of men.

His ſubject, therefore, ſaved him from the deſperate enterprize; and prevented him from falling into thoſe errors and abſurdities which deprive many a lively poet of his reputation. To it he owed the ſtatelineſs and dignity with which Idomeneus the Cretan king appears on all occaſions. To it he owed the beautiful and unwarlike Nireus, the faithleſs Pandarus, and the amiable humane Patroclus. And above all the reſt, to this he was indebted for the noble contraſt of characters that adorns his poems. There we ſee the ancient Neſtor, mild, and calm, and talkative, oppoſed to the young fiery Theſſalian, the intractable Achilles: the too indulgent Priam ſtands by the prudent Polydamas, and the wiſe Antenor: the hardineſs of the noble Hector, and debauchery of the luxurious Paris, ſerve but to illuſtrate one another, and come all originally from the ſame fountain.

The detail of this part of his happineſs would prove tedious in any other hand than his own: but here are two remarkable circumſtances in Homer's writings, which have been generally looked upon as ſtrokes of art, where I am apt to think the na-

ture and ſituation of his ſubject bore a conſiderable ſway. It has been obſerved to his honour "That the characters of his heroes, though of the "ſame kind, and excelling in one and the ſame "thing, are yet all diverſified, and marked with "ſome peculiarities which diſtinguiſh them, and "make a ſeparation." Thus, for inſtance, both Achilles and Ajax, Diomedes and Hector, Ulyſſes and Merion, are all brave; but it is in a different manner. Achilles is fierce and impetuous, Ajax ſteady and firm, Diomedes gallant and open, Ulyſſes cautious and bold; and both Agamemnon and Hector are marked with that princely courage which becomes the generals of two great nations. This, my Lord, I hardly think could ever have been feigned; it was truth and nature alone that could form thoſe differences, ſo real and yet ſo delicate, and afterwards offer them to a repreſentation.

To deſcribe ſo many men; to point out their manners; to paint their perſons, relate their adventures, and make a long recital of their families, ſeems to be beyond the power of fiction. The making or feigning faculty, be it ever ſo rich and inventive, after an effort or two, recoils upon itſelf; and if it finds no ſtore of originals within, either falls a repeating the ſame characters with a tedious uniformity, or contrives falſe ones, that glare and make a ſhow, but by ſome wry features certainly betray their unlikeneſs to truth.

Homer has kept true even to the fortunes and eſtates of his heroes: Agamemnon and Achilles were the two richeſt men in Greece: the firſt, by reaſon of his large dominions and the ſovereignty of the iſles [a]: and accordingly we find him lending ſixty ſhips to the Arcadians, and inland people; and promiſing many towns and lands in dowery with his daughter. The other, Achilles, was lord of the rich Theſſalian plains, early famed all over Greece, for wealth and horſemanſhip [b]. He had likewiſe taken and plundered three and twenty towns lying round Troy, and was enriched by his ſhare in the ſpoil. We are not therefore ſurprized at the treaſure he throws away with ſuch profuſion at the funerals of Patroclus; nor to find him renowned for his horſes and chariot-racing, beyond the reſt of the Greeks. He was ſo remarkable for it, that when Ulyſſes meets his ſhade in the infernal regions, the firſt circumſtance which occurs to him is, "That now alas! he was there, Ἐλελασμένος Ἱπποσυνάων, *unmindful of his horſes and chivalry!*"

[a] Ἄντάρ ὁ αὖτε Θυέστ', etc. Ἰλιαδ. Β.

——————Thyeſtes next
This ſceptre left to Agamemnon's ſway,
To rule o'er many iſlands of the ſea,
And all the realm of Argos. Iliad. B.

[b] Ὦ Μένων, πρωτὸν μὲν Θετταλοὶ, etc. Πλάτων. Μένων.
"It is certain, Meno, my friend! ſays Plato, that the "Theſſalians were the firſt who obtained a name among "the other Greeks, and were admired both for their wealth "and horſemanſhip."

The ſecond thing which has been looked upon as a noble proof of his judgment, is the period of time he has choſen for the beginning of his poem. He has not, they ſay, ſet out with the firſt campaign; nor attempted to deduce the Trojan ſtory from the miraculous birth of Helen [a], or her brothers: he has confined himſelf to the laſt year of the war, and by that means filled his poem with hiſtory and action.

But here too, he was happy in his ſubject, which directed him of its own accord to make the choice. There were two diſtinct periods in the war. The firſt was long and tedious, while Achilles and his Myrmidons were fighting on the ſide of the Greeks, and ravaging the country around Troy. During all that time, the Trojans kept within their walls, and durſt not meet this dreaded warrior in the open field: ſo that there was but little to be deſcribed, except theſe excurſions to pillage, which are occaſionally inſerted in the dialogues of the Iliad.

But the ſecond period was ſhort and full of action: for no ſooner was the diſobliged inraged he-

[a] *Nec reditum Diomedis ab interitu Meleagri,*
Nec gemino bellum Trojanum orditur ab ovo.
Horat ad Piſon.

To ſing the ſafe return of Tydeus' Son,
He ſets not out with Meleager's death;
Nor from the egg, whence the twin brothers ſprung,
Deduces he far fetch'd the war of Troy.

ro retired to his ſhip, and had withdrawn his troops, than the face of the war was wholly changed. The Greeks were now no longer ſupported by his tremendous arm; and the Trojans ventured to quit their town, and face the enemy. Battles, and terror, and deſpair, took their turns in the camps, and filled every anxious hour with paſſion and amazement. The wrath of the hero was the ſpring of all this miſery; and therefore a happy theme for an epic or narrative poet.

It was ſo, in many reſpects. The wrath of Achilles was in reality the hinge of the war, and that upon which the whole of the great tranſaction turned. The time of action; the deſigns of the leaders; the diſpoſition and temper of the armies, all depended upon it, and were directed by it. This made it a kind of rule for the conduct and diſpoſition of his poem: and if he kept it in his eye, (as we ſee he has certainly done) it would naturally lay out his general plan, and influence the proportions of the ſubſervient parts. It has, beſides, the peculiar excellency of ſhewing and exerciſing more paſſions, and of more oppoſite natures, than any other period of the war. It was raiſed by love and ambition, inflamed by pride, ſoftened by friendſhip, kept up by glory and conſcious virtue, and only vanquiſhed by a ſuperior paſſion, revenge.

Many other parts, and epiſodes, if I may ſay ſo,

of the Grecian expedition, furniſhed materials for epic poems. Demodocus ſung the ambuſh of the Trojan horſe; Phemius, the return of the Greeks with Agamemnon; and the little Iliad (a poem ſo called) contained both thoſe ſubjects, and the occaſional adventures that had followed upon the war; the adjudging the arms of Achilles,—— Philoctetes,—— Neoptolemus,—— Sinon, with ſome others [a]. But it is worth our notice, what judgment the father of criticiſm has paſſed upon theſe pieces. He ſays, "That whereas the Iliad and "Odyſſey could furniſh but two, or at moſt but "four, regular and entire actions, the little Iliad "could afford double the number; ſo that you "might compoſe eight different poems of the ma-"terials it contained:" So ſimple and connected a ſubject was the wrath of Achilles, and wandering of Ulyſſes!

It was, at the ſame time, not only rich in action, but in ſuch action as is capable of being deſcribed, and admits of recital. When a great town is taken ſword in hand, the carnage and fury exerciſed in it can hardly be told: that horrid face of miſery is, in the real meaning of the phraſe, be-

[a] Ὅιον Ὅπλων Κρισις, etc. 'Such as the judgment of the 'arms, Philoctetes, Neoptolemus, Eurypilus, the beggar, 'the Lacedemonian ladies, the deſtruction of Troy, the de-'parture of the ſhips, Sinon, and the Trojan captives.' Virgil has been deeply indebted to this performance.

yond expreſſion: the intenſeneſs of the ill tranſcends all language, and mocks the words we uſe in the deſcription. Much leſs can we collect, from every quarter, the various ſcenes of woe, and repreſent them together. But the action that has fallen to the ſhare of our poet, is generally of ſuch a nature as to give play to the imagination: we can follow it ſtep by ſtep, obſerve its progreſs, and loſe but little of the whole. We can accompany Diomedes and Ulyſſes in every motion of their nocturnal expedition [a]; and can walk up and down the Grecian camp, and viſit the watch, with Agamemnon and Neſtor, as if preſent upon the place [b].

It is true, we cannot comprehend the ſhock of a general engagement, nor deſcribe what is doing in all the parts of a battle: but the ancient manner of fighting made a compenſation for this to the poet. Their battles were, for the moſt part, ſo many duels, or ſingle combats of chief againſt chief, and man againſt man: hardly was there a random blow given, or a javelin let fly, without being aimed at a particular perſon. The warriors had time to know one another, and to throw reproaches and threats, as well as ſpears, at their inſulting adverſary. This manner of fighting is finely fitted for de-

[a] Ιλιαδ. Κ.

[b] Δεῦρ' ἰς τὰ φύλακας, etc. Ἰλιαδ. Κ.

Come — to the guards, let us ſtep down and ſee,
Leſt ſpent with toil, and overpower'd with ſleep,
They ſnoring ly, and diſregard the watch.

ſcription; and though we cannot be in all parts at once, yet we can attend upon a ſingle hero, hear him threatening, and view him performing, in the rage of the field.

I ſhould tranſcribe a great part of his poems, if I intended to point out every particular advantage which Homer reaped from this happy change. But there is one famous doubt concerning his works, which deſerves our attention. It is pleaſant to obſerve how ſeriouſly the ancients propoſe it, and it cannot be diſagreeable to find his ſubject affording an anſwer.

They ſeem inclined to believe "that the princi-"ples of all the ſciences are be found in his works: "no ſpecies or kind of writing for which he has "not ſet an example: nor almoſt any art, whoſe "precepts may not be deduced from his poetry." They went further, and entered into a detail of his knowlege. General aſſertions did not content them; but ſuch wiſe men as Dionyſius the Halicarnaſſean, and the ingenious Plutarch, thought themſelves judiciouſly employed, in collecting the ſeveral branches, and ſetting them together. They have attempted to ſhew, that poetry in all its forms, tragedy, comedy, ode, and epitaph, are included in his works: that oratory, politics, oeconomy, and war, are bound to acknowlege him as their maſter. The laſt we ſhould not ſo much wonder at, ſince the great Macedonian conqueror, among other honours done to his works, profeſſed himſelf

his ſcholar in this kingly ſcience: but ſome went ſtill further, and found the greateſt ſecrets of nature, and hidden myſteries of the univerſe, revealed or ſhadowed out by this wonderful poet. Hardly a depth in Aſtronomy, or latent principle in heaven or earth, which they have not diſcovered him to be acquainted with, and to have hinted at its powers in ſome alluſion or metaphor.

Theſe are indeed very ſtrange aſſertions; and it ſeems ſtranger ſtill, that the ſevereſt reaſoners in the world, the men leaſt obnoxious to illuſion or poetic enthuſiaſm, ſhould adopt and defend them. The famed Antiſthenes had begun a treatiſe to prove ὅτι τὰ μὲν δοξῃ, τὰ δὲ ἀληθείᾳ εἴρηται τῷ Ποιητῃ; *That the poet ſpoke ſometimes according to truth; and ſometimes according to appearance:* But not living to finiſh it, no leſs a man than Zeno, the parent of the ſtoic philoſophy, took up the deſign: he ſhewed, that Homer no where contradicted himſelf, pointed out the latent meaning of his allegories, and the natural ſenſe in which they were to be taken[a]. The learned Crates Mallotes, contemporary with Ariſtarchus, and Panetius's maſter, took a ſtep ſtill beyond them: he thought it not enough, that what Homer himſelf had touched upon ſhould be demonſtrated to be true; but actually applied his hypotheſes to the phenomena of things, and by their aſſiſtance, endeavoured to ſolve thoſe difficul-

[a] Διων. Χρυσόσ. εἰς Ὁμηρον.

ties in natural philoſophy, which had not been directly explained by the poet [a].

They did indeed imagine, that there was nothing in the world but what he underſtood: and being ſtruck with what they ſaw, they gave into the common weakneſs of mankind, and made large allowances for what they ſaw not. They came at laſt to perſuade themſelves, that a mind ſo vaſt could not belong to a man; that ſo much knowlege could only flow from a heavenly ſource; and having once firmly ſettled his Apotheoſis [b] in their own minds, they wanted next, that every thing about him ſhould appear ſupernatural and divine. The uncertainty about the place of his birth, they improved into a celeſtial lineage; but becauſe they knew not the name of his father, they called him the ſon of Apollo.

Appion the celebrated grammarian writes, "That the herb Cynocephale, the Egyptian Oſi-"rites, has a miraculous virtue: that it is a ſove-"reign remedy againſt witchcraft, and commands "the infernal powers: that the perſon who digs "for it, immediately dies; but that he himſelf "having procured it from another, had charmed "up the ſhades, and enquired into Homer's "country and parentage: that he had received an "anſwer, but durſt never publiſh what he had

[a] Τινες δ πρὸς Επιστημονικας Υποθεσεις ἐτρεψαν τὸν Ὁμήρου Ποίησιν. Στραϐ. Βιϐ. γ.

Deification.

"learned upon that ſubject[a]." To ſuch extravagancies does fond opinion lead us! it was not impoſſible, among the ancients, to improve a common accident into a ground of admiration; and the loweſt circumſtance in life, into a proof of their imaginary divinity[b].

But, the plain account, which Homer's ſubject makes of theſe ſuſpected ſciencies, is this: nature includes them all: her proportions are juſt and invariable: whoever paints her true, or any part of her that is full of action; and applies that action to times, places, perſons, and their ſigns, will include theſe proportions, and their meaſures, without intending it, but never without ſome perception of their propriety and truth.

It would be ridiculous to imagine, that Homer firſt learned the ſciences and their rules abſtractedly; that then he applied them to proper objects, and theſe again to the ſubject of his work: that by this means he had converted the principles of all the ſciences, natural and moral, into human or divine perſons, and then wrought them into the under-parts of his poem. This is beginning at the wrong end; and however proper the method may be, or rather neceſſary in philoſophy, it would ſpoil all in the hands of the muſes.

Homer took his plan from nature: he has followed her cloſely in every ſtep: he has related actions

[a] Plinii hiſt. nat. lib. xxx. § 2.
[b] See note [a] page 9.

and paſſions of every kind: he has painted places, perſons, animals, and ſeaſons, with their proper marks and qualities. He has done this with a conſtant view to the effects which theſe things produce; both as they ſtrike upon the human mind, and do good or ill in human affairs [a]. By this means he gives us back our own ſentiments on every accident in life, and paints the impreſſions we receive from the other parts of the univerſe. He becomes an allowed maſter in morals [b], and is ſuſpected of myſ-

[a] Τὸν Ὅμηρον, etc. Φιλοστρατ. Ηρωικα. § 11.

'Homer ſeems, as in a concert of muſic, to have ſung all 'the ſeveral parts which can poſſibly be introduced into poe-'try; and to have out-ſtript all his contemporary poets in 'that very thing in which each of them excelled. He is 'more noble and lofty in his language than Orpheus; his 'verſe is ſweeter than Heſiod's, and in other reſpects he has 'out-done the reſt. The ſubject he treats of is the Trojan 'ſtory, into which fortune had collected, and as it were ſet 'forth all the virtues both of the Greeks, and barbarous na-'tions: there he has repreſented wars of all kinds; ſometimes 'of men againſt men, ſometimes againſt horſes; ſometimes 'againſt walls and rivers, and ſometimes againſt Gods and 'Goddeſſes.——He has likewiſe repreſented peace in all 'it's effects; he has deſcribed dances and ſongs, and loves 'and feaſts; has taught what belongs to agriculture, and 'has marked the ſeaſons which are fit for the ſeveral ru-'ral toils: he has ſung of navigation, and of the art of work-'ing metals by fire; and has painted the different figures and 'manners of men. All this I think Homer has done in a 'wonderful and almoſt ſupernatural manner; and thoſe who 'are not in love with him cannot be in their wits.'——

PHILOSTRA. Heroics. ii.

[b] *Trojani belli ſcriptorem, maxime Lolli,* etc.

While you, great Sir, your tongue in Rome employ,
Here I retir'd have read the war of Troy;

tery and hidden meanings in the ſeveral branches of natural knowlege.

It is, I think, generally allowed, that a Poet's plan is much wider than an hiſtorian's. The writer of hiſtory repreſents but one ſingle portion of nature; and, for the moſt part, only that ſide of it which is connected with politics and government: but the poet, though confined to a ſingle action, takes mankind for his rule in the execution. He has an univerſal idea for his model, all the paſſions to fill the under-parts, and the whole train of accidents and adventures in war, dangers, and death, to make out his narration. He takes them originally from real life and a ſingle part; but he is not tied down to the circumſtances of the fact. The image turns general in his hands; and the more his ſubject is varied, the more richer and truer will be his imitation.

The *Veil of Fable* is of ſuch ſurprizing virtue, that it magnifies the objects which it covers: it ſhows them in a grander light, and invites the eye to contemplate them more eagerly than if they were open and undiſguiſed. To vulgar eyes it is dark and impenetrable, while it ſpeaks plainly to the wiſe; yet ſometimes amends is made even where it fails; for if you ſee not the real object, it preſents

Whoſe wondrous writer hath more clearly ſhown
What's good or bad, ſhould or ſhould not be done,
Than Crantor or Chryſippus———

HORAT. lib. i. epiſt. ii.

you with ſome ſpecies or appearance in its ſtead, which, though not ſo inſtructive, is perhaps as entertaining as the reality. Homer came into the world at a proper diſtance of time, after the expedition which he ſung; not too near it, when naked truth, and the ſevere appearance of known facts, might quaſh enthuſiaſm, and render ornaments ridiculous; but when the circumſtances of the ſtory had ſufficient time to ripen out into fable, or at leaſt be ſuſceptible of it, from a ſkilful hand.

His manner of writing muſt therefore be taken into the account. A metaphor is a general pattern, which may be applied to many particulars: it is ſuſceptible of an infinite number of meanings; and reaches far, becauſe of its ambiguity. It leads, as we found before, even to madneſs; and wantonly ranges the corners of the world for compariſons to fit its fancied properties. This way of treating a ſubject muſt render it ſtill more general, and when joined with the truth of deſcription, will account for the myſteries in Homer's writings.

But how wonderful a thing is it to be able to join theſe extremes? to ſpeak in the ſimpleſt and moſt comprehenſive manner: to ſoar ſo high, and ſtoop ſo low, as to follow nature minutely, and at the ſame time fill the images with expreſſion and majeſty. And yet the greateſt objections againſt our poet, ariſe from the too great truth of his deſcriptions; and from his repreſenting his heroes in thoſe

natural lights which we think below the politeneſs of our manners. They have been frequently anſwered; and here, their very foundation turns out to the honour of the poet, and proves the grand ornament of his performance.

It would, in reality, enter into no man's mind, to have given ſuch an epithet, for example, to a Prince, as Βοὴν Ἀγαθὸν Μενέλαον, *The loud-voic'd Menelaus*; had not the exigences of war rendered this a very eminent and uſeful quality. Before the invention of trumpets or drums, the leaders of armies were often at a loſs how to make a general ſignal; eſpecially by night, or in thick weather, when a viſible ſign could be of no ſervice. In the famous Scythian expedition, undertaken long after Homer's time, by Darius the father of Xerxes, we find a man of ſtrong lungs the moſt neceſſary perſon in the camp. This epithet then was taken from the real ſtate of things: and indeed it ſeems impoſſible, that either the poet's deſcriptions, or the actions deſcribed, ſhould be ſo different, and yet ſo true, had he followed any other guide.

The particular circumſtances of the ſeveral encounters could never have been ſo variouſly imagined in the road of fiction only: neither the ſingle combat between Menelaus and Paris, nor that between Ajax and Hector, where every thing is managed in a very different manner, and yet with the higheſt probability in both. In the firſt, the

prayer of the Grecian hero to Jupiter,——the ſhivering of his ſword,——the fury he feels at the diſappointment,——and breaking the lace that bound on the helmet of the effeminate Trojan, are delicate circumſtances, and nicely adapted to the temper of the warriors, and inequality of the match. In the other, where the heroes were more upon the level, and without perſonal enmity, how exactly do things fall out in proportion to this equality? the gallantry of Hector,——the bluntneſs of Ajax,——the effects of their ſpears,——and their betaking themſelves to ſuch rough weapons as ponderous ſtones, are agreeable to the ſtrength of the combatants, and the manner of fighting then in uſe.

I am not in hazard, with your lordſhip, of being underſtood as if I aſſerted, that Homer's accounts of facts, even excluding his allegories, are literally true: that, for example, the lot of Ajax ſprung firſt out of the urn, juſt as the Greeeks themſelves could have wiſhed; or that Hector's ſpear pierced exactly through ſix of the ſeven folds of his maſſy ſhield, and ſtruck in the laſt. This would lead into a peeviſh diſquiſition of the truth of circumſtances which poetry will never bear, and is againſt its laws: it is ſufficient, if the groſs of the hiſtory and chief characters are true.

And here we find the poet copying nature ſo cloſe, as to connect the manners of his heroes with

the make and caſt of their perſons. Their ſtature and aſpect is conſtantly ſuited to their temper and diſpoſition. His poem is like the firſt view we take of an unknown face, which prejudices in its favour, or creates a diſlike: in the ſame manner, we no ſooner ſee the form of a man delineated by Homer, than we expect from him ſuch paſſions and manners, and ſuch a kind of conduct, as we find aſcribed to him in the poem. Ulyſſes's picture is almoſt inimitable wherever he mentions him[x]: but it cannot be juſter than his herald's, the truſty Eurybates. This ancient perſon ſerved as a counſellor to the prince of Ithaca; he accompanied him to the ſiege of Troy, and held the chief place in his confidence and eſteem: his round compacted ſhoulders, his ſwarthy face, and ſhort curling hair, promiſe that kind of perception, and aptneſs for toil and buſineſs, which is neceſſary in a ſecond part in life, and make us think of a man who knows how to reſign his paſſions and appetites to thoſe of his maſter[y].

The characters of many other perſons in Homer are ſo beautiful, that it would be worth while to collect the accounts we have of their lives and fortunes from other writers, and compare them with

[x] See Ἰλιαδ. γ. line 192, and compare it with Ὀδυσ. Ζ, Η, Σ.

[y] ——— Κῆρυξ ὀλίγον προγενέστερος ἀντῦ,
Γυρὸς ἦν Ὀμοισι, μελανόχροος, ὀυλοκάρηνος. Ὀδυσ. Τ.

the poet's: but these historical scraps are very imperfect, and often contradictory to one another. For after all, Homer is the best historian [a]: and it is to be presumed, that the faint tradition, concerning the adventures of these heroes, was rather ingrafted upon the characters they bear in his poetry, than that they arose from a nearer acquaintance with them, or better opportunities to hear of them, than were enjoyed by the poet. The prettiest thing of this kind is a fanciful piece of the elegant Philostratus, which he calls his Heroics. His favourite among them all, is the unfortunate Palamedes, whom he endeavours to raise upon the ruins of Ulysses; and speaks much of the injustice done him in the Iliad.

[a] Και γὰρ ϗ ὕτως, etc. Φιλοστρατ, Ηρωικα, § xviii.

'As for Homer's poetry, I am so affected with it, as to 'think it divine, and beyond the reach of man: and now I 'am more astonished than ever; not so much at the art and 'machinery of the poem, or with that peculiar sweetness and 'charm that runs through the whole; but much more with 'the names of the heroes, with his accounts of their families; 'and principally how it comes to pass, that each of them 'was destined as it were to kill some certain prince, or to 'be killed by another. For whence had he the persons 'whom he introduces? Such as his Euphorbus, Helenus, 'and Deiphobus? and besides whence had he his knowlege of 'the great number of leaders in the enemy's army whom he 'recounts in the catalogue? For it is plain that Homer does 'not feign these things; but relates real deeds, which were 'truly performed and acted, excepting a few which he seems 'to have purposely contrived, in order to diversity and soften 'his poetry.

Philoſtratus manages the cauſe of his neglected hero, with the humanity and good-nature which is remarkable through all his writings. He mixes every where high praiſes of Homer, and, in order to excuſe him, contrives a ſtrange enthuſiaſtic ſtory of an agreement or compact between him and the ghoſt of Ulyſſes. He ſuppoſes it impoſſible for any perſon to have come at the knowlege of ſo many particulars concerning the Trojan war in a natural way, and therefore feigns that Homer conjured up Ulyſſes's ghoſt, who revealed them to him, upon this condition; "That tho poet would palliate his "faults, and raiſe his character in his writings, "by giving him the honour of the actions of Pala-"medes."

But a later author[a], zealous and grave, and a great enemy to the Grecian ſuperſtition, has put the matter upon a different foot: he affirms, "that "it was Palamedes who wrote the poem of the "Trojan war; that Homer had received it from "Agamemnon's poſterity, and was bribed by them "to omit the paſſages that did honour to the au-"thor, or reflected upon their parent. The poet "complied, and ſuppreſſed the name of Palamedes "through envy, a paſſion, ſays he, that taints the "greateſt minds."

This ſtory, the only bad one I ever read of our poet, as it is told by Suidas, contradicts itſelf, and therefore

[a] Σουιδας, in Παλαμηδ.

requires no refutation. I would only take occaſion from it to remark, that one of the greateſt changes which ſcience has undergone, and one little obſerved, firſt took birth when theſe authors wrote. Philoſophy was putting on a new face about the age of Philoſtratus: it was beginning to forſake the natural precepts of life and morals; to neglect that noble connexion, which the firſt maſter had eſtabliſhed, between phyſical contemplations and this prime ſcience of manners and actions. A connexion never to be over-looked; and which we have the ſatisfaction to ſee revived [a], ſince the ſciences have gained a new luſtre; and by the happy application of geometry and numbers to the appearances of nature, have loſt that uncertainty which was long their reproach, and the cauſe of their decay.

But inſtead of this, in Philoſtratus's age, the knowlege of ſecrets was coming in vogue. Unnatural virtues, and marvellous feats, were affected by the vain-glorious leaders of the ſeveral ſects: they found it eaſier to diſtinguiſh themſelves by high pretenſions, than by laborious ſtudy, and a conduct, unſhaken by the frowns of fortune, and humble under her ſmile. Slavery was growing intenſe: not only virtue felt its ſting, but whatever

[a] See Philoſoph. Natur. Princip'a, Scholium ult. of Sir Iſaac Newton, Chronology, chap. ii, and iii. of the ſame author. Cumberland de Legibus Nat. Characteriſt. vol. II. treat. V. Theodicée de Leibnitz. Derham's Aſtro and Phyſico-Theology, and Woolaſton's religion of nature delineated,

belonged to greatneſs of mind, or had any relation to freedom of thought, was a ſuſpicious quality. Learning in general fell under the diſpleaſure of tyranical power; and the ſuperiority and firmneſs which the knowlege of men and things inſpires, grew dangerous amidſt a croud of ſlaves.

Such a preſſure upon the minds of learned men made them look out for uncommon relief: either they ſtretched the powers of the human mind to an impoſſible pitch of inſenſibility, which was the revival of high ſtoiciſm; or they attempted to bring new ſupports from heaven, when they could find no recourſe upon earth. Some reigns afterwards, about the time of Suidas, when the philoſophers came to be haraſſed likewiſe on another ſcore, they unanimouſly gave into this latter folly: they were all agog after miracles; and a general affectation of a ſupernatural intercourſe between the Gods and them, like a phrenzy, had ſeized the perſecuted ſages.

It is in this very taſte that Philoſtratus relates the ſtory of Palamedes, in a converſation with a philoſophical hermit, who had retired from the world, and lived in a vineyard: he ſays, that the young and amorous Proteſilaus uſed to appear to him once a week in a favourite walk, teach him ſome divine ſecrets, and then complain of the hard uſage that Palamedes, and ſome of his brother heroes, had received from the Grecian bard: The whole rela-

tion is extremely fanciful and amuſing, and adorned with all the ſweet elegant circumſtances which you might expect from a philoſopher loved by a princeſs: but is not of weight to alter the received opinion, "That Palamedes died before he had "done any thing very conſiderable in the war; "and that what he did, fell not within the buſy "period choſen by our poet for his ſubject."

The faint accounts of the other princes, and the wandering reports concerning their lives, are not worthy of greater regard. They are mentioned by the old hiſtorians of Greece, whoſe writings we have now loſt: but though they had eſcaped the hand of time, we ſhould have reaped but little advantage: for Homer has obtained credit ſo far above them, even in reſpect of their veracity, that Strabo, who had ſtudied them carefully, declares "he would rather believe him and Heſiod, "and the Tragedians who have copied their Heroic "hiſtory, than follow Hellanicus, or Theopom"pus, or Cteſias, or even Herodotus himſelf[a]."

His ſubject therefore ſtill comes uppermoſt, and appears with greater excellency the more it is canvaſſed. It is this that diſtinguiſhed him amidſt the poetic tribe, and joined with his language, manners, and religion, has left him without a rival. The great difference between him and Virgil has been already pointed out in a lively elegant eſſay upon the

[a] Ῥᾴδιον δ' ἂν τις Ἡσιόδῳ καὶ Ὁμήρῳ, etc. Στραϐ. Βιϐλ. ἕ.

life of our poet: it comes originally from a hand already ſaid to be happy in painting modern life; and who, at the ſame time, has taught Homer to ſpeak engliſh incomparably better than any language but his own[a]. It was his invention that made him the firſt of poets; whoſe ſources and opportunities have been the principal object of this enquiry.

But if your lordſhip will indulge me in the liberty taken by Juvenal's ſhe-critic[b], I would further obſerve, that Virgil had been accuſtomed to the ſplendour of a court, the magnificence of a palace, and the grandeur of a royal equipage: accordingly his repreſentations of that part of life are more auguſt and ſtately than Homer's. He has a greater regard to decency, and thoſe poliſhed manners which render men ſo much of a piece, and make them all reſemble one another in their conduct and behaviour. His ſtate-deſigns and political managements are finely laid, and carried on much in the ſpirit of a courtier. The eternity of a government, the forms of magiſtrature, and plan of dominion (ideas to which Homer was a ſtranger) are familiar with the Roman poet. But the Grecian's wiles are plain and natural; either ſtratagems in war, or ſuch deſigns in peace as depend not upon forming a party for their execution. He excels in the ſimple inſtructive parts of life; the

[a] Homer's Iliad, tranſlated by Mr. Pope.
[b] Juvenal, Satyr. 6.

play of the paſſions, the proweſs of bodies, and thoſe ſingle views of perſons and characters, that riſe from untaught, diſguiſed nature.

This difference appears no where more ſtrongly than in the chiefs of the armies. The characteriſtic of Homer's hero is violent paſſion; his *honoratus Achilles* muſt be

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer:

Paint him, ſays Horace,

Forward, and fierce, of unrelenting wrath.

Nay ſo great was his impotence of mind, that when the young Antilochus brought him the diſmal news of Patroclus's death, he was forced to hold the hands of the diſtracted hero, leſt he ſhould have attempted to cut his own throat[a]. It is true, we are apt to make allowances for this exceſs of paſſion: we think of the ill uſage he met with: our eye is turned upon his unbounded courage and ſuperior ſtrength, and we are willing to bear with his haughty ſpirit: but what ſhall we ſay to the prince of the Grecian powers, who was to think for them all, and lead their armies; their ſtay and confidence, the ſtately Agamemnon? How is he toſſed and agitated between anger, love, and dread of a miſ-

[a] Δείδια γὰρ μὴ λαιμὸν ἀποτμήξειε σιδήρῳ. Ἰλιαδ. Σ.

carriage? He is not aſhamed to own his paſſion for a captive maid, in face of the whole army: he tells them plainly "that he likes her much better "than his lady, the beautiful Clytemneſtra, of the "prime Grecian nobility." He is beſides, now and then, a little covetous; and tortured with fear to ſuch a degree, that his teeth chatter, and his knees ſtrike one againſt another; he grones and weeps, and rends his hair; and is in ſuch piteous plight, that if we were not well aſſured of his perſonal bravery, we ſhould take him for a downright coward.

But Virgil durſt make no ſuch condeſcenſion to nature, nor repreſent the human frailties in their genuine light. His characters are all formed and regulated; and except that his hero is ſometimes, as Don Quixote ſays of his Amadis, *algo lloron, a little apt to weep*; excepting that, and the cave-adventure, he behaves in every other reſpect with all the dignity and reſerve of a Roman ſenator.

Here the force of the model appears, and the power of public manners. Virgil's poem was to be read by a people deeply diſciplined; whoſe early neceſſities had taught them political forms, and from being a company of Banditti, had forced them into public virtue. Theſe forms had time to take root in the minds and manners of the nation; and conſtancy, ſeverity, and truth, was become a Roman character. Even when the ſubſtance was gone,

when luxury and high ambition had ſtript them of their original integrity, they were ſtill forced to feign and diſſemble: they put on a ſhew of virtue; and though they were really vicious, and knew themſelves to be ſo, yet they could not bear a profeſſed ruffian, nor an avowed profligate: they became nicely ſenſible of reputation, and what they called a man's fortune; not in our ſenſe of the word, but that fate, which as they imagined, attends every man, and over rules all human enterprizes. For this reaſon they did not love that any accident, which had frightened or put them in diſorder, ſhould be known. They thought it diminiſhed their authority, and made them little in the eyes of the people; and therefore concealed their paſſions, and the events that raiſed them. Thus they diſunited things from their appearances, and by that means diſguiſed their humanity.

But the natural Greek, in Homer's days, covered none of his ſentiments. He frankly owned the pleaſures of love and wine; he told how voraciouſly he eat when he was hungry, and how horribly he was frighted when he ſaw an approaching danger: he looked upon no means as baſe to eſcape it; and was not at all aſhamed to relate the trick or fetch that had brought him off: while the haughty Roman, who ſcorned to owe his life to any thing but virtue and fortitude, deſpiſed accidental eſcapes and fortuitous relief in perils; and ſnuffed at the

ſuppleneſs and levity of mind neceſſary to put them in practice.

After the heroes, the difference appears moſt conſpicuous in the female characters of the two poems. The ladies make but an inconſiderable figure in the Eneid; and excepting a queen, who raiſes horror by the fatal cataſtrophe of her death, the reſt are feeble languiſhing ſhadows, who ſeldom ſpeak or act throughout the piece. Lavinia herſelf, who ſhould be the moſt amiable and important character, is an obſcure retired perſon, whom we hardly know. She is juſt like a Senator's daughter, kept from ſight; and, according to the rules of a wholeſome oeconomy, without a will or paſſion of her own. The Italian reſerve appears in her manners, and that paſſive tameneſs with which our gay people find ſuch fault in the virtuous characters of the ancient plays.

But the heroines of the Grecian poet are among the ſtriking figures of his ſubject. His captive-beauties are indeed in a ſtate that draws compaſſion; they are too much upon the eaſtern eſtabliſhment, to be looked upon without pain, by one accuſtomed to European, and particularly to Britiſh manners. To think of a fine woman, dragged away from an indulgent father, or a fond huſband, and left at the mercy of a brutal conqueror, bathed in the blood of all ſhe loved, is a moſt ſhocking circumſtance: it is not to be palliated, even though

they are repreſented in a little time, as pretty eaſy under the diſpenſation, and unwilling to part with their new acquaintance[a].

But Homer's ladies of quality are all remarkable for great good, or great ill, and make their appearance accordingly. The too lovely Helen is not more diſtinguiſhed by the gracefulneſs of her perſon, the charms of her face, and that air or grandeur which accompanied her motions, than by a mind capable to pleaſe. She is not only fitted for ſofter hours of life, but anſwers Priam the old Trojan king, with all the diſcretion of a privy counſellor. She appears at times with a high ſenſe of honour; and in the end laments ſo feelingly the ſlip ſhe had made through the wrath of Venus, calls herſelf ſo many hard names, and touches upon a tender point (her former lover) with ſuch delicacy, that I make no doubt but many a good-natured huſband, to ſee her look, and hear her talk,

[a] Ἐκ δ' ἤγαγε Κλισίης, etc. Ἰλιαδ. α.
Briſeis blooming from the tent he brought;
Then gave her to the heralds, to be led
Along the Grecian ſhips, to their proud Lord;
The dame unwilling went.——
Δμωαὶ δ' ἀς' Ἀχιλλῆϊ, etc. Ἰλιαδ. Σ.
The women whom Patroclus, now ah dead!
And great Achilles, late had captives made.
With anguiſh pierc'd, run ſhrieking forth, and found
Their mournful maſter proſtrate on the ground;
Beating their tender breaſts.——

would approve of Menelaus's taking her home, after ſhe had lived ten years with another.

The ancient Hecuba, and the young Andromache, are the livelieſt characters of a tender mother, and a more tender wife, that ever were painted. All their ſpeeches, and ſentiments, are ſo natural and juſt, that it is impoſſible to read them without emotion. They, and old Priam, are the only perſons who ſpeak long; both as they are moſt ſuſceptible of fear, and the apteſt to complain under a calamity.

The aged venerable king, when he would perſuade his daring ſon to re-enter the town, and ſhelter himſelf from the ſpear of Achilles, uſhers in his ſpeech with a moving action. He acknowleges the ſuperiority of the dreadful hero, and then falls into a natural wiſh, "That the Gods had no greater regard for him than he." He calls to mind the miſeries which he had brought upon him; and they are ſo diſtracting, as to make him forget Hector for a little, and talk of Laothoe and her children, whom Achilles had ſlain.——But ſoon returning to the preſent object of his care, he again begs him to come within the walls; not ſo much to ſave himſelf, but leſt Achilles ſhould triumph, and to ſend from ſlavery and death the men and women of wretched Troy: then remembering his own feeble and deſtitute condition, if Hector is killed, he raiſes his voice, and calls upon him to return, at

leaſt, to keep his aged father from beholding thoſe miſeries that ſtare him in the face: he bids him do it, Ἔτι φρονέοντα, *while he is yet in his ſenſes*, which has a peculiar beauty, and is ſtrangely moving: it ſignifies either *as yet alive*, or rather, *before he begins to doat*; when he ſhould be inſenſible of his fate, and like a captive infant, not know whether he was happy or miſerable.

The recital which Andromache makes of her own life, when ſhe would diſſuade her loved Hector from going to battle; the loſs of her father, her mother and brothers; her own forlorn ſtate if ſhe looſes him too, are all the dictates of nature itſelf. But what ſhe adds, when her tears begin to flow; the uſe ſhe makes of her orphan circumſtance, is melting beyond expreſſion. She ſtops a little,——looks at him,——and then burſts forth,

Hector! now thou'rt my all: my father firſt,
My tender mother, brother, and my huſband.

The remaining characters, Hecuba, Penelope, Nauſicaa, and Calypſo, act and ſpeak with the ſame propriety: they ſerve but to lead us back to Homer's ſubject. They ſhew its fitneſs for poetry in every reſpect we can conſider it, and by every compariſon we can make with it. It is ſo rich and luxuriant, that the poet ſeems almoſt overwhelmed

with the flow of paſſions and ſentiments which croud upon him, and offer themſelves to deſcription. He has ſeldom room to appear himſelf; and as Strada ſays elegantly of Lucretius, that he is frequently covered with the machinery and majeſty of his ſubject [a], ſo Homer is perpetually perſonating, and ſays little or nothing as immediately from himſelf.

It here appears, that nature is the ſureſt rule, and real characters the beſt ground of fiction: the paſſions of the human mind, if truly awaked, and kept up by objects fitted to them, dictate a language peculiar to themſelves. Homer has copied it, and done juſtice to nature. We ſee her image in his draught, and receive our own perceptions of men and things reflected back under different forms. By this means he fixes our attention, commands our admiration, and enchants our fancy at his pleaſure: he plays with our paſſions; raiſes our joys; fills us with wonder, or damps us with fears: like ſome powerful magician, he points his road, and ſpectres riſe to obey his call! nay ſo potent is his ſpell, that hardly does the enchantment vaniſh; it is built upon truth, and made ſo like it, that we cannot bear to think the delightful ſtory ſhould ever prove untrue. His work is the great drama of life acting in our view. There we ſee virtue and piety praiſed; public religion promoted; temperance, forgiveneſs, and fortitude, extolled and rewarded;

[a] Proluſiones poetic.

truth and character followed; and accordingly find it ſtanding at the head of human writings.

By theſe ſteps, then, Homer is become the parent of poetry, and his works have reached their exalted ſtation: by the united influence of the happieſt climate, the moſt natural manners, the boldeſt language, and moſt expreſſive religion: when theſe were applied to ſo rich a ſubject as the war between Greece and Troy, they produced the Iliad and the Odyſſey. Their conjunct powers will afford your lordſhip the wiſhed-for ſolution; and a proper anſwer to the queſtion, "By what fate or "diſpoſition of things it has happened, that no "poet has equalled him for upwards of two thou"ſand years, nor any, that we know, ever ſur"paſſed him before?" Since it is no wonder, if a production which requires the concourſe of ſo many diſſimilar cauſes, ſo many rare chances, and uncommon ingredients, to make it excel; (the abſence or alteration of any one of which would ſpoil it;) that ſuch a production ſhould appear but once in three or four thouſand years; and that the imitations which reſemble it moſt, with due regard to the manners of the times, ſhould be next in eſteem and value.

THE END.

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